



Specialist Schools  
and Academies Trust  
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

# Annual report 2006/2007



Specialist Schools  
and Academies Trust  
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

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# Glossary

**Affiliated.** A school, academy, higher-education institution or organisation that is a member of ours.

**Applied GCSEs.** GCSEs in work-related subjects (see 'applied learning'), such as engineering.

**Applied learning.** Learning that is based on the world of work. Students involved in applied learning often work on real projects set by businesses.

**Consultant head teacher.** Usually a head teacher of a secondary school who we have approved to provide advice and support to other schools.

**Designation.** When a school is first granted specialist status by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

**Edexcel.** An educational organisation based in England that provides and assesses internationally recognised qualifications.

**High-performing specialist schools (HPSS).**

Top performing schools that take on extra roles so they can share good practice and help partner schools and the wider community.

**Lead practitioner.** Outstanding teachers who are funded to spend time working with other teachers in their area of the country to share curriculum resources and ideas for improving teaching and learning.

**Mainstream schools.** Mainstream schools cater for students representing a wide range of abilities. Some mainstream schools can also cater for children with special educational needs.

**Maintained schools.** State-funded schools that the local authority is responsible for.

**Mentor schools.** Schools we have approved to provide advice and support to other schools, using a range of staff from senior leaders through to expert classroom teachers.

**Personalised learning.** Providing education that is adapted to students' individual abilities, needs and interests. This includes deep learning, deep experience, deep support and deep leadership.

- **Deep learning** is helping students to develop their skills (such as learning skills and being able to understand what they need to learn) that will make them stronger, more involved and thoughtful learners, in school and out of school.
- **Deep experience** is about giving children a richer experience of school, often through the curriculum and new technology, so that students are more interested in taking part in their learning and find school more rewarding.
- **Deep support** is when schools and teachers work with other people, institutions and agencies to provide a safe and secure environment where students can achieve deep learning and deep experience. This includes focusing on giving advice and guidance and mentoring and coaching.
- **Deep leadership** is about how school leadership teams (senior teachers) can redesign the way they provide education to create a culture of meeting students' needs, where every member of the school community is able to contribute to leadership, and where deep learning, deep experience and deep support can be achieved.

**Raw results.** The total of all pupils' examination results within a school.

**Redesignation.** When a school meets the conditions to continue being a specialist school.

**Rural dimension.** A rural dimension to a specialism is when a school is committed to providing opportunities for students to increase their understanding and experience of the countryside as a place to live and work.

**Second specialism.** When the DCSF invites a school to specialise in another curriculum area.

**Special school.** A school that provides special education for pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN), whose needs cannot be fully met within mainstream schools.

**Specialism.** The curriculum area in which a specialist school chooses to focus. Schools can choose from 10 subject-based specialisms, special educational needs or a vocational specialism.

**Specialist school.** A school which applies to become a specialist school and receives extra funding to provide more courses and better facilities in some subjects. In return for the extra funding, specialist schools are expected to raise standards of their students' achievement. Specialist schools also share specialist resources and expertise with other schools and provide courses for learners in the local community.

**Sustainability.** Living and working in a way that has as little negative effect as possible on the environment, now and in the future.

**Trust school.** A state-funded (maintained) school supported by a charitable trust. Charitable trusts can include a range of partners such as businesses, universities and colleges. The trust appoints school governors and supports the school in a range of ways to provide new opportunities for young people.

**Value-added scores.** These show the progress pupils in a school have made between their test results at age 11 and at age 16 (some students may take the tests at ages outside this range).

The value-added score for each pupil is the difference (positive or negative) between the results they have achieved and the average results achieved by other pupils with the same or similar test results at age 11. The value-added score for each school is the total of all the pupils' scores in the school.

**Wider key skills.** These are skills pupils gain in:

- improving their own learning and performance;
- working with others; and
- problem solving.



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## Foreword

In January we celebrated our 20th anniversary. Since we were set up in 1987 (with the first City Technology College (CTC) at Kingshurst opening in 1988), we have made progress towards all maintained secondary schools in England becoming a specialist school or academy.

By September 2007, there will be 2736 mainstream secondary specialist schools, academies and CTCs which represents 90% of eligible mainstream specialist schools in England.

We have always focused on raising students' achievement and academic standards in schools so that all children can achieve everything they are capable of. In 2006, 59.5% of students at specialist schools or academies got five or more GCSEs at grade A\* to C. 45% of students at specialist schools achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A\* to C including maths and English. Results were consistently better than the national average.

Schools have contributed to the success of the specialist schools programme by analysing information to judge what has gone well and what has not. This has also made sure that lessons learned from one year can be successfully used in years to come.

Our partnerships with the wider community, including our sponsors, have also made a major contribution to our success. Since 1987, they have given over £300 million which has been essential to help specialist schools and academies achieve their specialist status. These partnerships have also created many opportunities for students to take part in projects, award schemes and work experience that provides learning outside the classroom. We awarded Oracle Corporation our Sponsor of the Year award to recognise their ongoing support and partnership involvement with projects, especially the ThinkQuest competition (see page 11).

As we move towards all secondary schools becoming specialist schools, we will continue to build on our success by working with our schools, networks and partners to change education and raise standards in schools. Above all, we will aim to make sure our activities are led by schools and focus on schools.

Sir Cyril Taylor GBE

Chairman, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

## Introduction

At our 14th national conference held in November 2006, the Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair, described us (the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT)) as 'the most dynamic education organisation in Britain'.

We are proud to credit this to:

- the network of schools formally linked (affiliated) to us taking a 'by schools, for schools' approach, which means they have led our activities and made sure they are focused on schools; and
- the leadership of head teachers in the network's programmes.

The network continued to draw its strength from partnerships regionally, nationally and internationally. By March 2007, there were over 4400 members.

The National Head Teachers' Steering Group (NHTSG) continued to identify our priorities and helped make sure we kept to our commitment to diversity, sustainability (which includes responding to concerns about the environment), and working with our national and international network of schools. To do this, the steering group drew on the work of over 30 head teachers' steering groups in the regions, in every specialism and in most of our programmes.

This year we continued to develop our work with special schools. Another 82 special schools affiliated to us, taking the total to 225. The special schools network also worked with mainstream schools to raise achievement and develop the special educational needs (SEN) specialism. We also set up our primary schools' 'family of schools' network, with its own head teachers' steering group. The Academies Steering Group continued to develop a growing network covering the full range of our activities.

We also strengthened our strategic partnerships. With Hanban, the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, we set up a Confucius Institute to promote teaching and learning Mandarin in schools and we also worked with the Chinese National Academy of Education Administration in Beijing. We delivered important programmes in partnership with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which used to be known as the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Training and Development Agency (TDA), British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta), National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Quality Improvement Agency (QIA), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and Prudential, among many others.

Our Raising Achievement and Transforming Learning (RATL) programme continued to achieve results by raising standards. Working with the DCSF we continued to run The Leading Edge Partnership Programme to focus on students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Our work continued to be influenced by leading academics, who we are delighted to have such strong relationships with.

Finally, the contribution of students themselves has added to the strength and enthusiasm of our networks. By the end of the year, 14 regional student voice steering groups had been set up. These groups gave students the opportunity to work with their teachers and others to develop ideas and proposals to guide their own learning and manage their education.

This annual report:

- describes our activities and achievements between April 2006 and March 2007
- sets out how we far we progressed towards our aim to contribute to developing a system that meets the needs of every student.

Our ambition is that all children should be able to achieve their potential.

Elizabeth Reid

Chief Executive, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust



# Our performance against our objectives

Our corporate plan for 2006/2007 set six objectives for the financial year 2006/2007. Our senior management team and our council monitored our progress against the plan throughout the year.

The following sections of this report set out each of the objectives as they appear in our 'Corporate plan 2006/7 – 2008/9', and our performance towards meeting each objective. The document ends with a summary of our financial performance in 2006/2007.

- Objectives in our corporate plan 2006/7 – 2008/9
- Objective 1 'Developing the specialist schools and academies system'
  - Objective 2 'Developing specialisms and subjects'
  - Objective 3 'Raising achievement'
  - Objective 4 'Developing partnerships with business and the community'
  - Objective 5 'Developing leadership and fostering innovation'
  - Objective 6 'Developing the organisation'

### Main results

- By September 2006, 2691 mainstream and special schools had become specialist schools or academies. By the end of the year, 87% of mainstream secondary schools were either specialist or in the academies programme.
- During 2006/2007, 98.4% of eligible schools successfully redesignated (kept their status as a specialist school).
- 27 more special schools became specialist schools in October 2006, 12 chose to specialise in subjects that are part of the curriculum and 15 specialised in special educational needs (SEN).
- A total of 3142 schools in England were affiliated to us, including 227 special schools and 194 primary schools. 447 of these schools affiliated during 2006/2007.
- There were 46 open academies in September 2006 and we worked with another 20 schools which were aiming to become academies.
- 22 higher-education institutions were affiliated to us by the end of the year.
- In specialist schools and academies, on average, 59.5% of the students achieved five or more GCSE grades between A\* and C. With English and maths included, the average was 45%.
- Of the 21 academies with students in Year 11, the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C increased by about four times the national average (6.3%).
- We helped more than 110 schools start the process of becoming a trust school.
- 73% of mainstream secondary schools took part in our activities to do with specialisms and the curriculum.
- More than 1100 teachers took part in our leadership programmes, and 368 schools were involved in development and research networks.
- We arranged over £8.85 million of sponsorship from companies, individuals, trusts and foundations for the specialist schools system.
- In February 2007, we were awarded 'recognised for excellence' status by the European Foundation for Quality Management.
- Our international group, iNet, more than trebled links to 1177 affiliated schools in more than 30 countries.
- Our income rose from £39.6million to £50.2million – an increase of 26% on the previous year.

## Objective 1: ‘Developing the specialist schools and academies system’ ‘Develop a secondary schools system that provides excellent teaching and learning for all students.’

**Driven by our principle of ‘by schools, for schools’, where our activities are led by schools and focus on schools, we continued to support specialist schools and academies to work together and develop as centres of excellence. Through this framework, we extended and promoted the school networks, which are dedicated to raising achievement and encouraging new ideas.**

The number of specialist schools continued to increase, reaching 2691 in September 2006. By the end of the year, 87% of mainstream secondary schools were either specialist or in the academies programme. During the year, 98.4% of schools who applied successfully redesignated (kept their specialist school status), which was higher than our target of 95%. We raised sponsorship which allowed 118 mainstream schools to apply to become specialist schools in October 2006, 60 of which were successful, and another 127 schools applied in March 2007.

In October 2006, 27 more special schools became specialist schools. Twelve of these had curricular specialisms and 15 specialised in special educational needs (SEN). A further 56 special schools applied for specialist status in March 2007 – 38 applied to specialise in SEN and 18 applied to specialise in curricular specialisms. The only special school that qualified for redesignation kept its specialist school status. It was also named as a high-performing specialist school (HPSS) and chose a vocational (work-related) specialism. Four mainstream schools also chose SEN as an extra specialism.

By the end of March 2007, 88% of mainstream secondary schools had affiliated to us. This was 2721 of mainstream schools and 127 of these affiliated to us between April 2006 and March 2007. The number of special schools affiliated to us reached 225, with 82 affiliating during the year. Of these 225 special schools, 92 specialised in SEN.

Our work with affiliated schools was guided by the National Head Teachers’ Steering Group which was made up of head teachers of affiliated schools from each region and each specialism, including SEN, to make sure our activities were led by schools and focused on schools. The steering group expanded to include representatives from our international network, iNet, and from primary and rural dimension schools (schools with an extra commitment to help students understand and experience the countryside as a place to live and work in), as well as a representative from the Chinese network, which is made up of schools that teach Chinese studies and languages and have relationships with schools in China.

Senior leaders or teachers from over 2780 mainstream secondary schools and over 280 special schools, took part in at least one of our programmes or events during the year (including events open to schools which were not affiliated to us). Together, the events attracted more than 31,400 people. A new publication, ‘Mainstream and special schools work well together’, looked at the benefits of special and mainstream schools sharing their knowledge and resources.

We helped more than 110 schools move towards becoming trust schools. (A trust school has support from a charitable trust and has flexibility over management matters, such as admissions, employing staff and managing the school’s land and assets.) Secondary, primary and special schools can apply to become trust schools either separately or in groups. All the schools involved from the beginning of the programme (known as ‘pathfinder schools’) found partners to join their trusts from a range of businesses, charities, universities and colleges.

As well as working with schools, we continued to work closely with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to make sure that academies received a prompt and valuable service that met their needs. In February 2007, the National Audit Office published a formal report on the Government’s Academies Programme after visiting 17 academies.

The report supported the Academies Programme and referred to the valuable support our programmes offered. It found that the level of service and the expert knowledge we offered was ‘excellent’ or ‘good’.

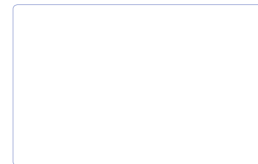
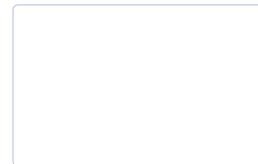
In September 2006, there were 46 academies open. Our academy support programme offered a tailor-made service to 66 academies which were either open or being set up, using school and consultancy networks. The programme helped academy principals in many different areas including:

- designing the curriculum;
- using information about students’ performance;
- developing leadership skills;
- literacy and numeracy;
- new technology; and
- getting more out of their specialism.

We published ‘The making of an academy’, which is the first in a series of publications sharing the lessons learned from successfully building and developing new academies.

The Academy Leadership Induction Programme, which we run on behalf of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), gave more support to new principals. Under this programme, experienced academy principals worked as consultants with new principals for up to five days. Principals who took part in the programme gave it a score of 1.53 (scores range from 1 (‘excellent’) to 5 (‘very poor’’).

Last year, 111 more primary schools affiliated to us through the Family of Schools programme which encourages links between primary, secondary and special schools. This took the total to 200 schools. In response to this growth we set up the Primary National Steering Group. This group influenced and shaped the programme offered to primary schools, which included national and international events where teachers could meet and share experience. The Developing Leaders programme, delivered in partnership with NCSL, included 27 more primary teachers than in the previous year.



### Westminster Academy, London

**The Westminster Academy Internship Project set out to provide high-quality work placements during term time for all students at Key Stage 4.**

The overall aim of the project was to develop a programme of work-based learning to improve the academy’s vocational curriculum, get students more involved and increase levels of achievement.

Our consultant Chris Horton, from Magnified Learning, worked with Westminster Academy, Westminster Community Partnerships and about 170 local businesses to provide up to 240 work placements, which began in September 2006.

With our support and advice, Magnified Learning developed a placement diary which allowed students to record evidence of their work-based learning in the Key Skills ‘Plan, do and review’ framework. As a result of their writing, photos and other evidence gathered in their diaries, many students were able to show they had developed ‘Wider Key Skills’ in the workplace. They are:

- students improving their own learning and performance;
- working with others; and
- problem solving.

With our ongoing support, the project provided enough work placements for all the students involved. Before the end of this first placement year, over 60 Year-11 students were entered into at least one qualification.

**Objective 2:  
'Developing specialisms and subjects'  
'Harness the specialist system to develop the curriculum and enhance subject pedagogy.'**

We helped develop subjects and specialisms and 73% of mainstream secondary schools took part in activities relating to specialist subjects and the curriculum. We also worked to help all specialist schools and academies to develop applied learning, as a base for students to move into further education, training or employment.

Events held across the country included support and resources for all eight applied GCSEs (GCSEs in work-related subjects). Examples of successful teaching and learning practices were featured on a DVD funded by DfES – Applying it – which was sent to all secondary schools.

Our partnership work with Edexcel included developing an applied learning package called Vocational Advantage. Eighty-four schools helped to test the package, and training events took place around the country. Together, we also developed a BTEC Award in Mathematical Applications to give students the chance to learn maths skills while taking part in vocational (work-related) subjects.

Over the year, 60 new high-performing specialist schools (HPSS) chose to specialise in vocational subjects as well as their first specialism. These schools are called 'vocational second specialist schools'. These 60 extra schools brought the total vocational second specialist schools to 107 (we aim for 200 schools to take up this opportunity by 2008). Seventy vocational second specialist schools and their partners were successful in applying to the DfES for the Diploma Gateway (the gateway was set up to make sure that, in the first few years, diplomas would be offered for programmes that met the highest standards).

Local network meetings allowed vocational specialist schools to share their experience and knowledge.

We continued to develop support for subject areas through the following 10 specialist networks.

- Maths and computing
- Science
- Foreign languages
- Music
- Humanities
- Arts
- Business and enterprise
- Technology
- SEN
- Vocational

Regional meetings gave schools the chance to discuss and share their ideas and developments.

We brought together a group of people with an interest in languages (including head teachers from six specialist schools) to provide information to be used in Lord Dearing's review of how languages are learned. This group was also consulted through questionnaires. The final report of the Dearing Review was published in February 2007.

**'These events are highly inspirational and valuable in learning new skills to develop a broader curriculum'  
Teacher who took part in a lead practitioner's good-practice seminar**

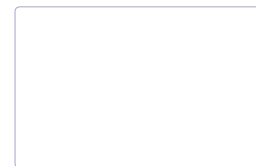
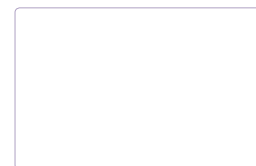
The team responsible for the 14–19 National Diploma Network built relationships with seven more national organisations involved in the DfES 14–19 Workforce Reform Programme. In partnership with the Quality Improvement Agency, we consulted schools and colleges and designed a training programme for people teaching specialised diplomas.

In our lead practitioner programme, outstanding teachers (known as 'lead practitioners') worked with other teachers to help schools develop their specialist subjects and be more creative when teaching the curriculum. Lead practitioners ran 90 good-practice seminars during the year, in which 1223 teachers took part (473 more teachers than our target of 750). People who took part in the seminars gave them a score of 1.73 points. (Scores range from 1 (excellent) – to 5 (very poor)). Lead practitioners also ran other events in schools in every English region. These visits allowed the teachers who went to the seminars to follow them up in more detail. There was also a website that gave support, including case studies, lesson plans and lesson resources.

As part of our support for personal and professional development for specialism directors and other leaders, we set up a two-day programme for all specialisms, which included a handbook with guidance and materials. These events were given a score of 1.8 (scores range from 1 (excellent) – to 5 (very poor)). A similar one-day programme for subject and specialism leaders focused on improving their leadership and how they manage their specialist school plans.

**'I've taken ideas out into the network and other teachers are using the example from the day.'  
Teachers who took part in 'Aiming for Excellence' events, November 2006. Taken from the TNS UK Ltd evaluation report.**

In July 2006 and February 2007, we held 'welcome' conferences for new specialist schools. For the first time, we held two conferences for new high-performing specialist schools. 104 (98%) of the 106 people who took part said that going to the event would have a positive effect on their schools.



**Applied learning – planning projects and putting them in place**

As part of the Applied Learning Programme, we delivered 36 national 'Aiming for Excellence' events in partnership with the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) and involved 655 schools.

The events covered eight subjects and focused on how higher grades could be achieved in applied GCSE subjects by involving employers and providing work-based learning.

We recruited a group of lead practitioners, who delivered the events as well as a series of 60 learning visits to schools. The learning visits focused on best practice and we made resources available online to support classroom teachers.

These online resources included a series of lessons showing leading applied teaching and learning. An equal-opportunities section on the website highlighted the challenges and rewards for students following careers in professions such as early years, social care, health, manufacturing, and engineering.

We monitored the Applied Learning Programme for quality and value for money.

# 123 456

## Objective 3: 'Raising achievement' 'Build capacity for schools to lead the raising of achievement and system transformation.'

Building on previous years, this work helped schools and students improve their performance. By March 2007, half of all mainstream secondary schools had taken part in our programmes and activities to raise achievement.

Over 500 schools were involved with the Raising Achievement Transforming Learning Programme (RATL) to improve examination results for students aged 16. A team of more than 50 school-based consultant head teachers and more than 75 mentor schools (including 17 high-performing specialist schools (HPSS)) delivered the programme.

The results for the year showed that 75% of schools improved their performance since joining the project. Their raw results (the total of students' examination results in a school) and value-added scores (which show the progress students in a school have made between ages 11 and 16 based on test results at these ages, compared with similar students at other schools in England) were consistently higher than the national averages. Of the schools that improved, their results improved by an average of over 6.5%. The schools still working towards improvement stayed involved in the programme.

Results published in our 'Educational outcomes and value added by specialist schools 2006 analysis' also showed how academies have improved. Of the 20 new academies, 18 got better GCSE results in 2006 compared with the last year of each school the academies replaced. Seven academies improved the percentage of students achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, by over 50%.

Because we recognise that understanding exam performance is vital to raising achievement, we introduced the Engaging with Examination Performance Data programme. This helped schools assess their exam results using an online toolkit with support in the school from a consultant head teacher. 500 schools used the online toolkit.

The Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement campaign funded 103 schools over the year to develop better ways of involving parents. Another 350 schools joined the programme to share research and development. Two conferences attracted over 750 people – more than we expected – and they gave the conferences an average score of 1.6 (scores range from 1 (excellent) – to 5 (very poor)). In March 2007, the DfES published 'Every parent matters', which recognised our contribution to models of good practice in involving parents to raise achievement.

Special and mainstream schools worked together to help develop SEN as a specialism. The Every Child Achieves Network was central to the work to improve education for children with a wide range of needs, backgrounds and abilities. Research and events helped to spread new ideas and share knowledge, as did the publication 'Mainstream and special schools work well together', which showed how effective partnerships between mainstream secondary schools and special schools can help raise every student's achievement.

To help meet the challenge of underachievement among students from poorer social and economic backgrounds and from particular ethnic-minorities, we continued the Leading Edge Partnership Programme (LEPP) with the DfES. This provided support for senior school leaders and classroom teachers to raise achievement and encourage creativity. LEPP involved more than 200 lead schools, working with over 800 partners.

We also set up the Consultant School Accreditation Scheme. This is a quality standard for schools that show they have worked effectively with others to improve their school in many areas, using different methods to make sure staff, resources and support are available to put changes in place. Two schools were awarded the accreditation and another 42 schools were being considered at the end of the year.

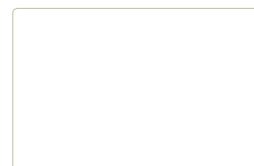
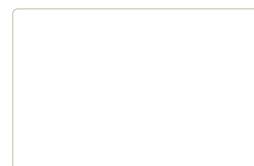
To acknowledge excellent practice in reflecting the experiences of including pupils from different cultures and fighting racism, we introduced the Trust Cultural Diversity award, which was presented to two schools at our 14th national conference in November 2006.

It is essential that schools use new technology effectively. With Oracle Education Foundation and the DfES, we launched ThinkQuest UK in October 2006. In this programme, teams of students from around the world could work together to create educational websites for a competition in the UK and an international competition.

'People don't have to be in the same room any more, they have virtual lessons. So from around the world you get people's different perspectives and different cultures meeting.'  
Mark Holmes, ThinkQuest student, Long Stratton High School

Teachnet UK continued its successful work to gather teaching and learning resources produced by teachers and publishing them on the internet so that schools could share successful classroom resources. The number and range of resources increased over the year, including primary-school resources and those in subjects such as English and literacy which have fewer resources online.

Our Information Communication Technology (ICT) register grew during the year so that over 400 primary and secondary schools are now on the register. The register encourages schools to share successful practice in ICT, including early years education providers and city learning centres.



## Bishop Rawstorne Language College Leading Edge Partnership Programme

Bishop Rawstorne Language College was the lead school in a Leading Edge Partnership and worked with four other schools in Lancashire. The partnership aimed to improve pupils' performance and involve pupils from poorer social and economic backgrounds who are not going to schools or taking part in learning when they are there.

The language college shared its knowledge and skills with the other schools in the partnership by:

- training school leaders (senior teachers) on management skills and using information effectively to monitor and track pupils' performance; and
- sharing knowledge on using new technology.

The partnership held intensive classes for pupils at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with subject staff working together. The partnership also introduced mentoring programmes using mentors from Edge Hill University to help pupils learn.

The partnership benefited all the schools involved. The senior teachers at the language college improved their leadership and management skills. The senior teachers at the partner schools also improved their effectiveness as leaders and their ability to share leadership among colleagues. The way they used information about their school also improved.

Through the intensive classes and study support, the schools were able to raise results in maths and English.

## Objective 4: ‘Developing partnerships with business and the community’ ‘Harness the specialist system to develop business and community partnerships, and to establish schools and academies at the heart of communities.’

**We worked to promote partnerships between specialist schools, businesses, higher and further education and other organisations. We also supported learning in the community.**

We also raised sponsorship, including £1.5million to fund events and projects. This was 60% more than we raised the year before and involved more sponsors than before. We raised another £6.25million for schools working to become specialist schools and almost £1.75million for designated schools, those which were already specialist schools.

In May 2006 we presented our Sponsor of the Year award to Oracle Corporation at our annual lecture. The event, held to thank sponsors for their continued support, was hosted by the Royal Opera House. The award was presented by Jim Knight, MP, Minister of State for Schools and 14–19 learning. The minister came to a number of events during the year, including:

- the rural welcome conferences for new schools;
- a rural schools network head teachers’ forum;
- the vocational conference; and
- the dinner for participants in the Raising Achievement, Transforming Learning project.

We continued to develop relationships with leading academics, whose insights we based many projects and developments on. Professor David Hargreaves and a team of our authors produced a second series of pamphlets on personalising learning, covering:

- deep learning (which looks at helping students become more interested and thoughtful learners);
- deep experience (which looks at how students can experience learning in different ways so they are more interested in taking part in learning activities);
- deep support (which provides a safe and secure school environment so students can achieve deep learning and deep experience); and

- deep leadership (which looks at how senior teachers can create a learning environment where deep learning, deep experience and deep support can be achieved).

Our activities and programmes also benefited from links with our partners, including:

- National College for School Leadership;
- Becta;
- Training and Development Agency;
- the Arts Council;
- Christies; and
- Hanban, the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, based in Beijing.

In 2006, we agreed with Hanban to set up our Confucius Institute which would be the first school-based institute in the world to promote teaching Mandarin in schools.

In July 2006, after two years of development and with the continued support of the Corporate Social Responsibility Team at Prudential plc, we sent a CD-ROM, ‘Adding up to a lifetime’ (AUTAL), to all secondary schools in England. AUTAL was aimed at students in Years 9 to 11, and dealt with issues around working out personal finances in five stages of life. AUTAL was awarded the pfeg Quality Mark. The pfeg Quality Mark, awarded by the personal finance education group (pfeg), is awarded to resources that have been assessed as appropriate for teaching personal finance and are accurate and up to date.

Working with business and other sponsorship partners strengthened the links between schools and local communities. Nearly a third of mainstream secondary schools took part in community programmes and activities made possible by their partnerships with businesses.

Getting involved with the community is part of being a specialist school. We supported specialist schools (and schools working to become specialist schools) to develop and provide their community programmes. More than 1200 people from over 800 schools took part in our community programmes, events and activities throughout the year. The overall score for the events was 1.8 (scores range from 1 (excellent) – to 5 (very poor)).

In February 2007, we held a celebratory dinner to recognise schools that had succeeded in developing their rural dimension.

Another important community initiative was publishing nine regional profiles, based on England’s nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and government office regions. These profiles helped schools to identify what their own aims and priorities have in common with other regional and local organisations.

Partnerships with higher education institutions (HEI) grew considerably over the year, with 24 formally affiliated to us. HEIs worked directly with our network of schools, which helped schools and HEIs work together more and understand each other’s needs. The second annual HEI and school conference was held in March 2007, with more than 50 people from schools and 75 people from HEIs.

Our regional and national forums provided six opportunities for teachers and school managers to get involved with HEIs. This helped improve teachers’ understanding of how young people can move from school to higher education, making teachers more aware of the specific skills and knowledge needed to get into higher education and study successfully. Another benefit was that gifted and talented sixth formers had an opportunity to take part in courses at a university level. A new admissions guide for school staff, ‘Admissions to higher education: adviser’s directory’, supported this work and was extremely well received by schools.

We hosted breakfast meetings with business people, policymakers, partner organisations and head teachers to show the work specialist schools have been doing and to discuss priorities in teaching and learning. At the first meeting, in July, we discussed ways of dealing with current priorities for science. At the second meeting in October, we focused on languages. The meetings showed the work of specialist schools and resulted in a number of new initiatives between schools and our partners.



### King’s Wood School, Havering

**We aimed to support King’s Wood School with their first bid to gain status as a specialist technology school through support from one of our consultants and by providing advice about sponsorship.**

King’s Wood School decided to apply to become a specialist technology school in the October 2006 round of applications, after the school improved in many areas and was removed from ‘special measures’ (an Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) category for schools judged as ‘weak’ or ‘failing’).

Our London team worked with the school from an early stage of their bid. As a result, the school came to a joint seminar in June 2006, run by the Oracle Corporation with our support. The seminar explained a sponsorship scheme the Oracle Corporation offered, approved by the DFES, and the school received £25,000 of sponsorship in-kind from Oracle. King’s Wood already worked with The Jack Petchey Foundation which also agreed to sponsor them £12,500.

King’s Wood was able to use a specific support programme put in place for London schools and received extra support from one of our consultants to support the school to write their application.

As a result of the work of King’s Wood staff, the whole school community, and the support we provided, the school raised the sponsorship and was successful with its first bid. It will be opening as a technology school in September 2007.



# 123 456

## Objective 5: 'Developing leadership and fostering innovation' 'Harness the specialist system to develop leadership and foster educational innovation.'

**We offered seven leadership programmes last year (two more than in the year before). The programmes included courses designed for newly-qualified teachers, developing school leaders, middle-level school leaders, teachers who aim to become head teachers, experienced teachers, new head teachers and executive head teachers. Over 40 events and activities were designed and provided by nationally-recognised head teachers and academics.**

The leadership programmes involved 1075 teachers from 769 schools. Programmes were accredited by the University of Warwick, which allowed people taking part in leadership courses, and further study at the university, to count the programme towards a full Masters degree in Innovation in Education.

The established development and research networks continued to research what personalising learning means in practice. A total of 368 schools, centring on 50 schools, took part across all regions in England. The development and research networks, supported by Professor David Hargreaves, focused on deep learning, deep experience, deep support and deep leadership. The new practice helped schools to develop ways of personalising learning. Over 1600 people from more than 800 schools took part in related conferences and workshops. As a result of this work, we published our second series on personalising learning, which provided the inspiration for our 14th national conference.

More schools than ever before came to our national conference, held on 29 November to 1 December 2006 at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham. More than 1800 people from 964 schools were there. The Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair MP, said in his speech to the conference, 'This is now the largest education conference of the year and the trust the most dynamic education organisation in Britain.'

The overall score for the conference was 1.95 (scores range from 1 ('excellent') to 5 ('very poor')).

The continuing professional development (CPD) network, supported by 133 school CPD centres, gave teachers the opportunity to develop, share and put in place creative classroom practice using new technology. Ideas and strategies from the network helped teachers to increase pupils' achievement and include technology in all areas of the curriculum. Over 500 CPD centre tutors came to our training events, and took the ideas and strategies back to their schools and shared them with colleagues from other local schools.

Our international network, International Networking for Educational Transformation (iNet), helped schools share ideas, experience and practice, and helped develop partnerships between schools. By March 2007, the number of schools affiliated to iNet increased by three times the number of affiliated schools in April 2006, to include 1177 affiliated schools in more than 30 countries, including 99 schools in Holland and all 464 schools in Mauritius.

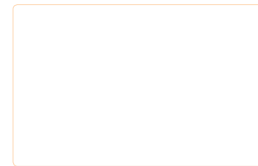
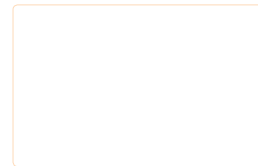
We held iNet events in Holland, Mauritius, Sweden, New Zealand, China and the USA. To start up iNet Georgia, USA, we held a conference in partnership with Georgia Southern University. The conference asked 'How do we prepare students starting school in 2006 for graduation in 2020?' The third iNet International Conference was held in Boston, USA, in November 2006, in partnership with Boston College and Boston Public Schools, attracting 245 people from 12 countries, with 26 speakers.

We held an international 'Transformation and Innovation' workshop for school principals, with the Chinese National Academy of Education Administration and with the support of HSBC in Beijing in October 2006. One hundred outstanding principals, including 20 from China and 80 from 13 other countries, came to the workshop. The principals developed an agenda for future schooling and published it in an official statement on which we based our plans for future iNet activities.

Technology helped share ideas, experience and good practice internationally. Over 60,000 teachers and 58,000 students took part in online conferences. The Futures Vision Bus Tour 2006, sponsored by Microsoft, Toshiba, Innovit and Syscap, took over 80 opinion leaders from business, industry and education on a tour of 12 schools in England. They presented awards to schools that had achieved excellence in 'creativity and enterprise'. Members of the iNet Futures Vision Group identified 18 issues to build world-class schools for the 21st century, which we published as 'Essential questions for the future school'.

We widened our international leadership programmes through a new initiative 'co-constructing system leadership', which was designed with Professor David Hopkins, HSBC iNet Chair of International Leadership. The programme, which was supported by HSBC, investigated how to move system leadership from a series of local initiatives to a co-ordinated national approach.

In March 2007, 68 senior school leaders worked with Professor Hopkins in three workshops to influence the content and structure of an accredited Masters module. The module is recognised in England and overseas and has received interest from universities in Chile, China and Hong Kong. As the new chair of international leadership, Professor Hopkins wrote a pamphlet, 'Every school a great school: meeting the challenge of large scale, long term educational reform'. Students were given the opportunity to work with their teachers and others to develop ideas and proposals to influence their own learning and manage their education. The National Inaugural Student Voice Conference, sponsored by HSBC, was held in June 2006. The conference was designed by students – members of London's student voice steering group – and over 200 students and teachers from more than 50 schools in London came to the event. We developed a CD 'Introducing student voice: Training pack 1' to provide resources and guidance to schools on setting up projects where students could have their say. More than 80 teachers and students came to training events introducing the CD.



## Kingsbrook Business and Enterprise College Deanshanger, Northamptonshire

**The school introduced the 'Student Voice' programme to provide ways for students, to tell them their views in the classroom, get more involved, achieve more and behave better.**

The student voice document 'Philosophy for Children' creates a process where students learn by asking questions in lessons to help them think about and understand the information, and through regular meetings open to all students. After being trained in the programme, Kingsbrook students led in a range of projects inside and beyond the classroom.

Students observed lessons and provided feedback about learning. Students supported each other through 'peer academic mentoring' and 'students as coaches' which involved Year-10 students coaching Year-9 students to help them prepare for their SATs. They started an anti-bullying campaign, and a behaviour-improvement council offered confidential support and counselling.

The role of the student council widened and a student leadership group was introduced to follow, observe and learn from the senior management team. Kingsbrook students also led our student voice workshops.

The programme has helped improve the school and helped students and staff to develop. Students involved have commented on how it has increased their self-confidence, improved their understanding of teaching and learning and developed their communication skills.

## Objective 6: ‘Developing the organisation’ ‘Develop SSAT to give practical support to the transformation of secondary education.’

We continued to show our commitment to the ‘by schools, for schools’ philosophy by further developing regional networks and steering groups. We held more than 300 conferences and events to show schools’ work in the regional and specialist networks and to share good practice.

Our National Head Teacher Steering Group helped set our priorities by:

- contributing to policy discussions with the DFES;
- considering information on students’ performance; and
- discussing what school-led system leadership means in practice.

More than 750 head teachers were involved in at least one of the steering groups throughout the year.

We opened new regional offices in Guildford, York and Stafford. These offices provided a base for regional and specialism co-ordinators, helped meet the needs of schools at a regional level and supported the regional networks.

In January 2007, Alan Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, addressed a reception at the Guildhall in London in honour of the sponsors of specialist schools and academies. Head teachers, sponsors and partners in education came to the reception.

We also held celebratory dinners to recognise the outstanding achievements in schools’ value-added results, schools who had shown most improvement, schools where 70% or more students achieved five A\*-C grades and schools with an ‘outstanding’ grade from Ofsted.

We published over 70 publications and sent out 10 regular newsletters, including SSAT News and those that focused on regions and specialisms. We sent a copy of each publication to all affiliated schools and made them available on our online shop. We produced eight toolkits and CD-ROMS which we also made available on the online shop. These included the ‘Data enabler toolkit’ and the ‘Personalising learning training pack’, the ‘personalising learning’ series and the iNet publications which focus on international issues.

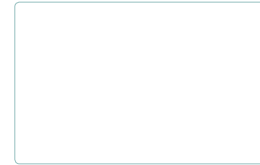
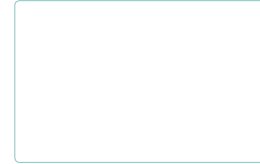
To raise the profile of specialist schools with the media, we made sure schools and head teachers had a voice. We gave journalists case studies of best practice, and teachers and chairs of steering groups gave interviews.

We continued to be a committed ‘Investor in People’ employer and introduced a number of new initiatives, including:

- a wellbeing programme for our employees;
- a staff consultative forum; and
- a diversity steering group.

Our environmental steering group helped us create projects to look after the environment.

We kept our ‘Positive about disabled people’ status, meaning we have agreed to take action to meet five commitments relating to employing, keeping and training disabled people and developing their careers. We also became a member of the Direct Marketing Association, which supports industry standards for responsible marketing. In February 2007 we were awarded ‘Recognised for excellence’ status by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).



### Quotes

‘We cater for 220 students with a wide range of special needs. Becoming a specialist school forced our staff to set meaningful targets and plans. I found that SSAT’s publications educated and supported staff and governors in this process.’

Mike Vening, Head teacher  
*Abbey Hill School and Technology College, Stockton-on-Tees*

‘We found SSAT’s regional co-ordinator to be a reliable first point of contact, putting us in touch with others able and willing to help, whatever the question.’

SSAT’s publications encourage schools to work towards higher achievement relevant to their interests and needs. It was one of the SSAT’s bulletins that inspired us to apply for the Futures Vision award for creativity and enterprise in 2006 – a national award which we, along with 12 other schools, won.’

Hilary Harrison, Head teacher  
*Epinay Business and Enterprise School, South Tyneside*

## Financial statement

Every year, we write a report on our financial situation. The Audit Committee has reviewed full copies of our audited accounts and these have been approved by the Trust Council.

We have sent copies for the year ending 31 March 2007 to the Charity Commission, Companies House and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). This is a summary of that report.

	2005/2006 £'000	2006/2007 £'000
DCSF grant (specialist schools and academies)	11,087	13,315
DCSF grant (achievement and applied learning)	16,497	20,033
Charges for services and other income	11,979	16,861
	<u>39,563</u>	<u>50,209</u>
Resources spent	38,557	49,889
Pension gain	470	998
Net movement in funds	1,476	1,318
Total funds as at 1 April	945	2,421
Total funds as at 31 March	<u>2,421</u>	<u>3,739</u>

**Pension gain** is how much our actuary works out the shortfall in our pension scheme has reduced by. This shortfall is the amount that we are advised to set aside to make sure we have enough funds to meet our pensions costs in the future.

**Net movement in funds** is the amount our reserves have increased by over the year.

### Creating income

Our income continued to increase in 2006/2007. It increased from £39.6million in April 2006 to £50.2million by the end of March 2007, which is an increase of 26%. Grants we received from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES – now DCSF) made up about 60% of our total income.

The rest of our income was made up as follows.

- £14.8million came from charges for services to schools and the DfES.
- £1million was sponsorship income that we processed for schools (we received a further £0.9million from the DfES partnership fund).

New programmes during the year for the DfES included the 14-19, Enterprise and Young Chambers programmes, while £2million came from doing more work on the Academies Programme. Our income from charges for services increased by £4.8million.

The increases in charitable expenditure (spending) were in line with the income growth set out below.

The chart below shows our charitable expenditure on each of our objectives.



### Reserves

Our reserves increased from £2.4million in 2006 to £3.7million in 2007. This includes a £0.3million surplus from activities during the year and £1million from a reduction in the amount set aside to make sure we can meet our pension costs in the future.

The trustees continue to review and manage our reserves. This review includes:

- the type of income we are creating;
- matching our income with our fixed commitments, such as salaries and rent; and
- the type of reserves we have.

The review confirmed that, to allow us to be managed efficiently and to provide continuous services, we should continue to build up a general reserve. We also put in place a system to monitor the position on our pension fund each month and take advice from our actuary so we know whether or not to set aside more reserves. This system monitors things within and outside of our direct control, including:

- changes in staff;
- market interest rates; and
- discount rates used by our pension actuaries in their calculations.

### Risk

We further developed our formal risk-management process to assess business risks and put in place plans to control those risks. This involves:

- identifying the types of risks we face;
- giving priority to risks which would have the biggest effect on us if they happened and are most likely to happen; and
- identifying ways of reducing the risks (and their effects) as much as possible.

We continue to follow best practice when developing our procedures for managing risk.

## Members of our council 2006/2007

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Chairman, SSAT

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Microsoft Corporation UK Ltd

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Christopher Campbell

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Sue Campbell  
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