

**BITC Member Company  
Education Case Study**

 ***ERNST & YOUNG***

## Company Details

Ernst & Young is one of the world's leading financial-professional-services firms providing services to clients based on assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. Globally, the firm employs 130,000 people in 140 countries. In the UK, the firm has its head office in London, which is home to about half of its 470 partners and 8,500 employees. It has a further 20 offices across the UK. Ernst & Young's community-investment programme concentrates on three closely interrelated areas: education, employability and enterprise among young people. Education primarily focuses on two schemes: *Education Partnerships*, with 13 state-maintained schools operating in challenging circumstances; and *Arts Matter!*.

## Educational Activities

Ernst & Young's community-investment programme concentrates on three closely interrelated areas: education, employability and enterprise among young people. Education focuses primarily on two schemes: Education Partnerships, with 13 state-maintained schools operating in challenging circumstances; and Arts Matter!, a joint initiative with the leading children's charity NCH that aims at realising the creative potential of some of the most socially excluded and disadvantaged young people. The Corporate Responsibility (CR) Team is responsible for the management of community investment, including the firm's educational activities and programmes. The team reports to a member of the firm's leadership team, the equivalent of a board, who has responsibility for Corporate Responsibility. The firm stresses that the involvement of senior executives is critical to ensuring commitment and advocacy at the highest level of the business.

In the context of Education Partnerships, each local office has a community champion who matches up with a member of staff in the local school to initiate and maintain the partnership. Communication between the national Corporate Responsibility Team and local champions is maintained through a regular feedback mechanism that encourages and supports local champions to report back to the national Corporate Responsibility Team. This culture of information sharing enables the firm to learn about and share different models of effective practice in building relationships with schools across the firm and to use good practice to introduce new projects across locations.

In the context of Art Matters!, a senior partner leads the firm's engagement with NCH and acts as a trustee for the charity. The scheme is managed jointly by Ernst & Young community-investment and arts teams and is integrated into the firm's arts-sponsorship programme. That enables the firm to exploit its relationships with leading galleries to ensure high-quality educational input from the galleries' education specialists and space to display young people's art work. A full-time project manager funded by Ernst & Young and employed by NCH also supports the programme. The firm acknowledges that it is essential to employ a project manager to ensure the sustainability and operational management of the scheme. The project manager meets Ernst & Young representatives regularly to

ensure a regular feedback process and to address challenges and issues as they arise.

## **Education Partnerships**

Forming the basis of the firm's community-investment programme, Education Partnerships address five key business needs:

- to attract and retain a high-quality and diverse workforce;
- for a skilled and developed workforce;
- for enhanced brand value and reputational differentiation;
- to support economic sustainability and regeneration; and
- to build local-community goodwill.

Working within its core competences, Ernst & Young takes a whole-school approach to supporting schools by establishing sustainable partnerships with state maintained schools in challenging circumstances. The firm acknowledges that ready-made 'off the shelf' programmes are less effective than programmes driven by the needs of particular schools, and stresses that working with its partner schools for a sustained period of time enables it to understand better their local challenges and needs: it sees them as crucial to ensuring well-tailored support aimed at supporting the learning and development goals of schools. Ernst & Young offers wide-ranging support to its partner schools: this includes support for pupils with academic, employability and enterprise skills; as well as support for teachers and those in leadership and management positions; and the wider school, including supporting management and improving the school environment. Current partnerships include primary and secondary schools in London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Luton, Bristol and Nottingham. They include the following:

### ***City of London Academy, Bermondsey, London Borough of Southwark***

Located in Bermondsey in the London Borough of Southwark, the City of London Academy is a new school for young people aged 11-19, concentrating on business enterprise and sports. The school was opened in temporary accommodation in late 2003 and moved to its state-of-the-art permanent facilities in September 2005. It currently has 738 students in Years 7-10 and a small sixth form of 50 students. The academy can be considered as being in challenging circumstances, with a third of its pupils being entitled to free school meals, one fifth with special educational needs and 12 pupils at an early stage of language acquisition. All these figures are above or well above national average figures.

### ***Bacon's College, Rotherhithe, London***

Located in and serving an area of considerable social disadvantage, Bacon's College is in challenging circumstances, with a high proportion of students from ethnic minority groups, a large proportion speaking English as an additional language, and a proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities higher than the national average. The college is oversubscribed for entry to Year 7 and Year 12.

### ***Alma Primary School, Bermondsey, London Borough of Southwark***

Alma Primary School is a non-denominational school for pupils aged 5-11. Its location, in the North Southwark Education Action Zone, is in one of the areas of highest deprivation in Europe. The school operates in highly challenging circumstances, since a significant proportion of pupils has special educational needs, a high proportion is eligible for free school meals, and a high number speak English as an additional language. All these figures are well above the national average.

### ***Johanna Primary School, Lambeth, London***

Johanna Primary School is a non-denominational school for pupils aged 3-11. The school operates in a highly challenging environment. It receives pupils from wide-ranging ethnic and social backgrounds. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is well above the national average, a large percentage of pupils speak English as a second (or third) language, and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly higher than in most schools. The school has been rated Grade 3 (satisfactory).

### ***Hampstead Hall School, Birmingham***

Hampstead Hall School is a mixed comprehensive secondary school for students aged 11-18. It has specialist status in sports, and mathematics and computing. Established in 1973, the school accommodates 1,137 students. It is one of the six schools in Birmingham with a Special Needs Unit, which caters for 45 students.

### ***The College High School, Birmingham***

The College High School is a mixed comprehensive community school for pupils aged 11-16. The school operates in challenging circumstances in an area of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above the average. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is high; and more than one third of students are from ethnic minority groups.

### ***Bannerman High School, Glasgow***

Bannerman High School is a non-denominational school with 1,400 students. It is located in the Baillieston area in the east end of Glasgow. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average, while pupils' attendance is below the national average. The school also has a Communication Disorder Unit, which supports pupils experiencing difficulty with communication that have been referred from other schools in Glasgow and beyond.

### ***Broughton Community High School, Edinburgh***

Broughton Community High School is a non-denominational secondary school, which serves the north-west area of Edinburgh. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The school is also home to the City of Edinburgh music school.

### ***Chorlton High School, Manchester***

Chorlton High School is a large mixed comprehensive specialist arts college for pupils aged 11-16. The school achieved its specialist art status in 2002. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above the national average, and the number with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average. Student mobility of students is also high.

### ***Hillsborough Primary School, Luton***

Hillsborough Primary School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 3-11. It is located in an area of high economic and social disadvantage and serves a higher than usual proportion of students eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students with special educational needs is above the national average, but very few students have a statement of special educational needs. Until recently, standards in the school have been below average. However, recent initiatives have helped the school to raise them.

### ***Whitefield Fishponds Community School, Bristol***

Whitefield Fishponds Community School is a mixed community school in East Bristol with language specialist status. The school accommodates students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. It has a high number of students joining or leaving the school during the academic year. In addition, the proportion of students with English as an additional language is high.

### ***Farnborough School Technology College, Nottingham***

Farnborough School Technology College is a mixed comprehensive secondary school with a specialist status in technology, for students aged 11-16. The school serves an area with a high crime rate and with socio-economic disadvantages. Overall standards reached by students joining the school are well below the national average and the proportion of students who have special educational needs is high. A very small number of students come from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few students have English as an additional language.

## **How do Education Partnerships Work?**

Ernst & Young, by and large, works with local broker agencies such as EBPs to identify the schools to form partnerships with. The firm stresses that identifying the right school to form a partnership with is the single most important factor in establishing sustainable partnerships. It considers that a partnership would not work if a school did not have the desire and the capacity to work with corporate partners. Even though the firm does not have fixed criteria to use during the selection process, it carefully considers four questions: school capacity, sustainability of the partnership, existing or potential engagement opportunities, and specialist status.

***School Capacity & Sustainability:*** Ernst & Young observes that the school's need and capacity to engage in a long-term sustainable partnership with Ernst & Young is critical; and it likes to ensure from the offset of the partnership that the

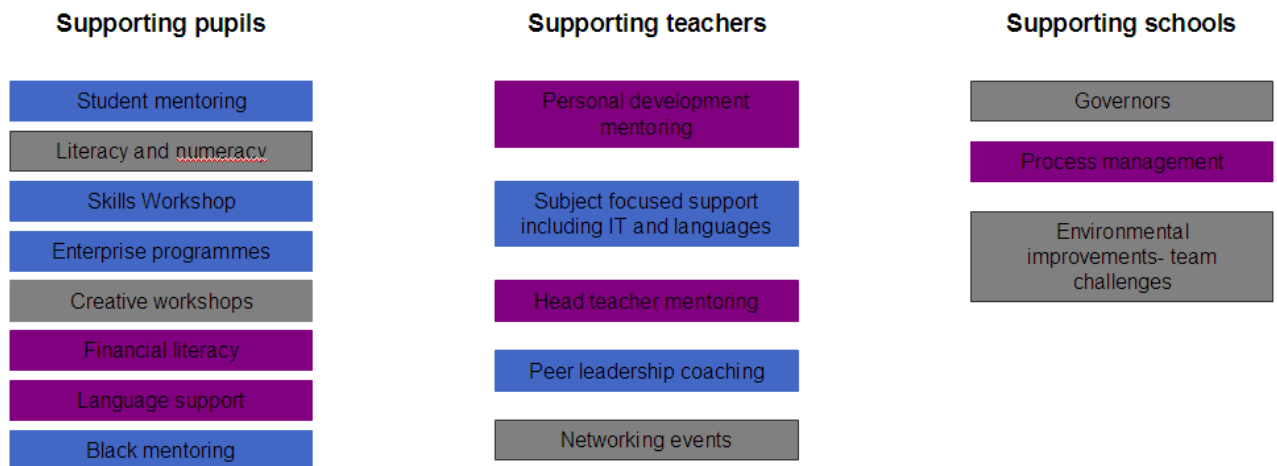
school has the vision and the capacity to engage in a long-term partnership with Ernst & Young.

**Engagement Opportunities:** Ernst & Young prefers to work with schools that have either existing engagement opportunities, or the capacity to formulate potential engagement opportunities strongly linked to their local needs, through which Ernst & Young can support them to raise their standards.

**Specialist Status:** Although it is not one of the priorities for the company, Ernst & Young’s partner schools include those with specialist status in a business or enterprise-related subject.

Among the schools meeting the company’s criteria, the firm chooses to work with those that are local to its offices. Once the partnerships have been established, Ernst & Young works closely with partner schools to identify opportunities tailored to the needs of the schools and the firm’s resources. The firm stresses that engaging in close interaction with its partner schools helps to build trust. This helps it to undertake conversations on sensitive issues, a recent example of which is the request from one of its partner schools to discuss how Ernst & Young could help it address the development areas identified by the Ofsted inspectors.

Through the Education Partnership programme, Ernst & Young supports pupils, teachers and schools by offering the following:



Key:  - Primary schools (5- 11 yrs old)  - Secondary schools (12- 18yrs old)  
 - Both

Source: Ernst & Young UK Education Partnership Programme

Ernst & Young encourages and supports its employees to take part in the above programmes by enabling them to take paid time off to volunteer. Volunteering opportunities differ according to local school needs and the resources of local offices. In 2006-2007, Ernst & Young employees volunteered over 4,000 hours

with a cash equivalent of £120,000. The firm uses various media to communicate these opportunities. Activities are reported through news items on the firm's intranet, through presentations, plasma screens and *Forward*, the firm-wide magazine; and have permanent coverage on the Corporate Responsibility intranet.

In addition to volunteering, the company also supports schools through one-off projects and one-off or continuing in-kind support through the provision of meeting rooms, stationery and books, which again differ according to local school needs and the firm's resources. In 2005-2006 the firm invested over £35,000 in projects.

A recent package that went to Alma Primary School included the following.

**Literacy support:** Volunteers from Ernst & Young have worked with 70 pupils struggling with reading through the literacy scheme they participate in.

**Spanish lessons for teachers:** Alma has seen a recent significant increase in the number of children speaking Spanish. To help the school deal with the increasing number of Spanish-speaking children, Ernst & Young delivers weekly basic Spanish lessons for teachers. This allows Ernst & Young to support the school's social inclusion strategy by helping teachers integrate Spanish vocabulary into lessons.

**WebPlay:** Ernst & Young responded to Alma Primary School's request for help with broadening pupils' horizons and helping them to think more widely than Bermondsey by introducing WebPlay to Year-5 pupils. WebPlay is an internet-based arts programme based on Oracle's think.com educational platform, which links pupils with peers in Los Angeles. Ernst & Young has funded the programme and teacher training, which the company believes is crucial to ensuring the sustainability of the initiative.

**Team challenges:** Ernst & Young volunteers have undertaken five team challenges to support the school in improving its physical learning environment. Among the challenges were the establishment of a new art room, regeneration of the library and creation of interactive learning environments in the playgrounds.

**Management structure:** Ernst & Young has helped Alma Primary School to implement a new management structure. The new structure is based on a model used by part of the business, which has helped Alma to be more effective in the way it identifies and manages risk and more active in making decisions.

**In-kind support:** The firm has provided numerous in-kind support including meeting rooms, book and stationary donations.

## **Art Matters!**

Art Matters! is a joint initiative established between Ernst & Young and the leading children's charity NCH. Two critical aims of Arts Matters! are to help some of the most socially disadvantaged and excluded young people to release their creative potential and enhance their confidence and self-esteem. The scheme has been UK-wide since it was launched in 2001, benefiting over 1,000 young people.

The scheme offers a programme of workshops led by artists, education sessions and gallery tours, and links in with a major exhibition sponsored by Ernst & Young. Young people are provided with the opportunity to work with local artists and Ernst & Young volunteers to develop their own artworks. They also study and are inspired by the work of one or more famous artists, which also supports them in making their own artworks. In 2007, over 170 people participated in 20 workshops across the UK, and their work was displayed in the National Gallery.

Early in each Art Matters! year, key stakeholders including Ernst & Young, NCH and the gallery develop a plan covering:

- recruitment and selection of NCH projects;
- selection and recruitment of artists to work with young people;
- selection and recruitment of Ernst & Young volunteers;
- a training day for the artists, project leaders and volunteers;
- workshop planning and implementation;
- displays of young people's art work; and
- gallery visits.

The project manager is responsible for recruiting projects, with the help of experts where appropriate, who help devise training programmes for artists, project leaders and volunteers. Key stakeholders work alongside an independent consultant that helps identify artists through influential agencies such as Art Council England. When selecting the artists, priority is given to local candidates, since that allows the relationship to develop in time. In addition, targets are set annually for the number of young people involved and for volunteering opportunities. An independent evaluation including feedback from NCH project leaders, NCH participants, Ernst & Young volunteers and gallery education representatives, is carried out at the end of each annual programme to explore how well targets are met, and to discover development opportunities and how well issues are responded to. On the completion of the report, relevant action plans are planned by the key stakeholders.

Ernst & Young fully funds Art Matters!, including covering the costs of the project manager, the artists, materials, travel and other miscellaneous costs. A budget is also allocated internally to cover promotional and other costs within Ernst & Young. In addition to funding a full-time NCH-based project manager, an Ernst & Young project manager with a time commitment varying from a day a week to full-time, depending on the point in the programme, is allocated to support Art Matters!. Media-relations executives, finance specialists, and marketing and internal communications specialists also contribute their time and expertise to the programme. Ernst & Young employees are allowed paid time off to volunteer for Art Matters!, including time to attend and support pre-programme training, artists' workshop sessions and gallery visits.

Ernst & Young's engagement with NCH in the context of Art Matters! has developed into a long-term partnership. A senior partner of Ernst & Young, who

also champions Art Matters!, has become a trustee of NCH. Among the current aims of Ernst & Young is to raise about a further £50,000 a year for the charity as well as to provide volunteers in various ways.

## **Impact**

As yet no long-term comprehensive, robust study has been carried out to explore the impact of the schemes and the evidence available on the educational benefits is limited. Evaluation and feedback is sought annually, however, from all stakeholders and is outlined below.

## **Company Benefits**

### **Education Partnerships**

Ernst & Young emphasises that Education Partnerships directly help the firm to make an impact on the five key issues that the firm's Community Investment programme concentrates on. The firm stresses that Education Partnerships provide the firm's volunteers with the opportunity for self-development and for widening their perspective on the world of education. Working in a new and challenging environment in schools demonstrates a new way of working, enhances existing skills while highlighting new abilities, and promotes a sense of satisfaction. Ernst & Young reports that:

- 80 per cent of volunteers believe supporting a partner school has enhanced their understanding of the challenges faced by inner city communities; and
- 75 per cent of volunteers consider that supporting a partner school has had a significant positive effect on their understanding of the education system.

The firm also highlights the fact that Education Partnerships provide Ernst & Young with an opportunity to address the corporate responsibility agenda. The firm states firmly that this helps them to tackle the growing expectation of existing and future employees, who want businesses to put something back into the communities in which they operate. Maintaining such an image makes the firm more attractive to future employees. By doing so it expands the pool of job applicants to choose from. The satisfaction current employees derive from being involved in educational programmes and activities also leads to improved staff retention. In addition, the following business benefits were recorded:

- 85 per cent of employees believe supporting a partner school has significantly enhanced their pride in working for Ernst & Young;
- 75 per cent of employees state that working with a partner school has positively influenced the way they represent Ernst & Young to colleagues;
- 100 per cent of employees that are client facing assert that supporting a partner school has had a positive impact on how they represent Ernst & Young to clients; while 70 per cent of them state a positive impact on how they represent Ernst & Young to their families and friends.

Last but not least, Ernst & Young stresses that the firm's Education Partnerships scheme has enhanced its reputation in the local communities in which it

operates, leading to regular invitations to take part in workshops and deliver conferences.

## **Art Matters**

Ernst & Young stresses that participation in Art Matters! provides volunteers with numerous opportunities for skills development. The firm reports that:

- 86 per cent of volunteers believe that participating in the scheme helps them enhance their leadership skills;
- 86 per cent of volunteers consider that it helps them improve their teaming skills; and
- 100 per cent of volunteers say that it has had a positive impact on their communication skills.

In addition to volunteer benefits, the firm firmly states that participating in the scheme helps to enhance volunteers' image of Ernst & Young. Findings include:

- 100 per cent of volunteers that state participation in Art Matters! increases their pride for working for Ernst & Young; and
- 86 per cent of volunteers believe that it positively influences the way they represent the firm to clients.

To a lesser extent, the firm states that the media coverage of the project also helps with brand reputation, improving its status as a responsible business, which is of critical importance in attracting new recruits and retaining current employees.

## **Education Benefits**

### **Education Partnerships**

When referring to Education Partnerships, Ernst & Young underlines that because each partnership is a unique one through which different forms of engagement evolve, it is difficult to talk about the generic benefits that could be attributed to different programmes. It prefers to concentrate on the benefits of adopting a whole-school approach. The firm firmly stresses that, by working in close partnership with the firm, each of its partner schools benefits from a support package tailored to its changing needs and challenges.

The common theme running through anecdotal feedback from all key stakeholders focuses on raising aspirations:

*'I have seen the benefits to individual sixth formers of having a business mentor in terms of their maturity and aspiration for the future'. Head of sixth form.*

*'My mentor has improved my view on the world of work and encouraged me to think about a career. I have had a taster of what working life would be like and I have understood what I have to expect. I can now set clear, attainable goals for the future. I feel as if the world is no longer a scary place in terms of work but one with many options for me'. Student,*

On peer coaching: *'It has been really useful to listen to people in another industry talk about their practice and try to find crossover areas, especially in the area of effective performance management.'* Teacher

### **Art Matters!**

Ernst & Young stresses that Art Matters! has had a positive impact on a wide range of stakeholders, including young people, NCH project leaders, NCH as an organisation, artists, and galleries. Benefits for pupils include an improved sense of achievement, enhanced motivation and aspirations, recognition for their work, and enhanced confidence in their artistic ability. In addition, a high percentage of Ernst & Young volunteers believe the scheme is highly beneficial for the participating young people:

- 100 per cent of volunteers stress that participating in the programme makes a real difference to young people, including 86 per cent of those who think it leads to significant positive impact; and
- 71 per cent of volunteers believe that Art Matters! raises the confidence and self-esteem levels of participating young people.

Among the benefits for the professional artists is the opportunity to expand their experience of working with young people from different environments. Among the organisational benefits to NCH is an enhanced public profile through local and international media coverage. Ernst & Young acknowledges that this helps NCH to raise more funds, and that it enhances awareness of key issues facing young people, particularly those who are socially excluded and disadvantaged. In addition, NCH has developed further links with other organisations as a result of building on earlier years' programmes to create other opportunities. An example of this could be the involvement of NCH with Image & Identity, a partnership project including five regional museums and galleries through the links created between Art Matters! and the Victoria & Albert Museum's education department.