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# **Fundraising for Primary Schools in England – “Moving beyond the School Gates”**

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## **Abstract**

*In response to depleting budgets and intensified performance pressures, primary schools are increasingly turning to fundraising as one mechanism for combatting ongoing challenges. Although research identifies that two-thirds of primary schools are actively trying to increase their fundraised income, some primary schools are significantly more successful in attracting additional funds than others, whilst many struggle to stimulate fundraising efforts ‘beyond the school gates’. This article focuses on three case study schools, and the individuals tasked with the role of fundraising, which have each adopted different approaches in a successful attempt to increase their fundraised income. The findings propose that when primary schools pro-actively focus on their fundraising, invest in people both in terms of time and their skills, and create a positive fundraising narrative which embraces both the schools and local communities’ needs, primary schools can succeed in attracting significant philanthropic support which can be transformative for the school community.*

## **Introduction**

Accepted as a routine part of school life, small scale fundraising such as school fetes, fayres and events have long been a common part of school life (Morris, 2011). This article argues that policy initiatives – such as Big Society and localism - alongside ongoing reforms to the UK education policy, has encouraged some schools to ratchet up their fundraising efforts to secure much needed additional income. Indeed, the current neoliberal driven ideology of public policy supports the notion that children will attain greater achievements if schools face more competition and have greater autonomy (Adonis, 2012). However, when it comes to fundraising within education, schools potentially face a difficult juxtaposition; on one hand research suggests that individuals are often unwilling to offer donations as a substitute for government spending (Breeze, 2012), on the other, increased pressures on schools and falling government spend per pupil (Institute of Fiscal Studies, 2015) mean that schools are forced to seek alternative forms of income generation (West, 2014; Ball et al, 2012). Fundraising efforts in schools are prominent throughout England with Parent and Teacher Associations (PTAs) (voluntary associations designed to improve parent and school collaborative working and frequently fundraise on behalf of the school), making up the largest group of core children and young people’s charities (NCVO, 2016). Ball and Junemann’s (2011) exploration of the role of philanthropists in the governance of education suggest that ‘*public sector education, philanthropy, and business are increasingly blurred and increasingly convergent*’ (p.659). However, in taking on an intensified approach to fundraising, schools are potentially heading into new and uncharted territory.

Philanthropic behaviour is complex and motivations for individual giving are multifaceted. Data suggests that whilst two thirds of all adults in England donate each year, only around 6% of those who regularly donate, give to schools (CAF, 2016), and those that do give, are

most likely to be females who occupy professional or senior management positions (CAF, 2015). Furthermore, demographic factors such as living in an affluent area, religiosity, being highly educated and occupying managerial or professional roles positively impact individuals' propensity to give (Carpenter et al, 2008; Mohan & Bulloch, 2011). Whereas, Andreoni (2006) identifies 'being asked' as a more important factor in giving than demographic factors, and Wiepking and Maas (2009) agree suggesting that being asked is the principal rationale for some individuals giving more. However, donations are not evenly dispersed over cause areas (Body and Breeze, 2015). Bekkers and Wieping (2007) identify eight mechanisms which drive individual giving decisions; the awareness of need, asking, costs and benefits, altruism, reputation, psychological benefits, values and efficacy. In addition, Breeze (2013) highlights four non-needs based factors which stimulate individuals giving decisions: personal tastes; individual experiences; perceptions of the recipient's competence; and a desire for impact. Furthermore, Payton and Moody (2008) suggest that individuals are more likely to give to causes they feel a sense of connection too.

Based on these factors some schools are likely to experience a tougher fundraising ask than others, however fundraising for schools is an area currently under explored within UK scholarly literature. This discussion is more developed in the United States (US), where philanthropic activity already plays a prominent role in education, as schools attempt to maintain quality in light of depleting budgets (Gee, 2011). Many schools and/or districts in the US employ professional fundraisers to carry out these duties on their behalf and fundraising is accepted as part of school life. Though this provides significant and much needed resources for schools, donors do have leverage over how this may be spent (Reich, 2007). However, within this context, research highlights how parents from areas of advantage can exacerbate inequalities in resource distributions due to increased donations (Posey-Maddox, 2016). Reich's (2007) study of philanthropic giving to schools in California highlights the increasing reliance on philanthropy and, as a result, evidenced increasing inequality across schools due to schools in wealthier areas being able to secure more additional resources than those in less wealthy areas. Subsequent research in Chicago drew similar findings (Ingram et al, 2007). Unsurprisingly parents of children attending schools in the US remain the most likely group to volunteer or fundraise for their school (Hountenville and Conway, 2007), perhaps motivated by the 'warm glow' of improving the school overall or individual students' experiences (Andreoni, 2007) or the desire to provide positive role modelling for their children (Mustillo et al, 2004). Indeed, Gee (2011) highlights how fundraising efforts and volunteering amongst parents is increased when parents perceive private benefits for their family. However, in contrast, Hountenville and Conway's (2007) research suggests that parental efforts decrease as school's resources increase, suggesting a potential 'crowding out' of school resources.

Focusing on the limited literature of fundraising for schools in the UK context, Lupton and Thrupp (2013) suggest schools in areas of economic deprivation face significant disadvantages in comparison to their counterparts in wealthier areas. Though government-funded mechanisms are in place, which are intended to counter these inequalities, such as pupil premium funding, resources still differ significantly between socio-economic advantaged and disadvantaged areas (Poesen-Vandeputte and Nicaise, 2015). In addition, efforts to pursue redistributive educational policies through the charitable law requirement for private schools to provide 'public benefit' are varied and inconsistent in impact (Wilde et al,

2016). Cuts to community-based services such as early help and family intervention support place further pressure on schools, as they cope with the dual burden of depleting school budgets and an increased demand on in-school support (Ball et al, 2012). Fundraising in higher education has received somewhat more attention. Attracting more major donations from philanthropists than any other sector, UK universities are well versed in acquiring philanthropic support (Coutts & Co and Breeze, 2016). Distribution of these donations is not evenly spread: universities with access to more elite networks obtain greater amounts of philanthropic income (Ball, 2012; Warren et al, 2014) and in 2014-15 the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, received more than all the Russell Group universities combined (Ross-CASE, 2016). Universities are increasingly seeking philanthropic income in order to deliver their core institutional missions (Huggins and Johnston, 2009), and are employing a range of different strategies to establish multiple and nuanced cultures of philanthropy which build upon both alumni and wider networks (Warren et al, 2014; Warren and Bell, 2014). More recent research suggests higher education has succeeded in securing philanthropic income based upon their capacity to utilise significant funding, the variety of activities they can offer which meet personal interests of donors, and having a track record of delivering change through innovation and education of the next generation (Coutts & Co and Breeze, 2016). Whilst philanthropic income is increasingly accepted as a substitute for state funding in higher education (Ball, 2012), the role of philanthropy in the preceding tiers of education remains less clear.

Body et al's (2016) recent research exploring voluntary action in primary education in the south east of England provides the backdrop for this research article. Drawing on financial data of 380 primary schools, and 114 survey responses from Head-teachers, this research found that a majority of schools engage in fundraising activities but there are significant disparities in the success of fundraising across schools based on socio-economic factors, leadership approach within schools, school size and school structure. This research identified that whilst 66% of schools sought to increase their fundraised income, the majority secured between £5-10k per year, whilst 10% of the surveyed schools secured more than £10k and only 2% secured more than £50k per year. Further disparities emerged, for example, smaller schools were likely to attract more than twice as much fundraised income per child than larger schools, and schools with a low proportion (under 20%) of pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM) raised three times as much per child as those schools with a high proportion (over 35%) of children entitled to FSMs. The research concluded that the consequences of this uneven distribution mean that on average schools in wealthier areas are more likely to have additional resources than those in poorer areas. Nevertheless, some of the schools in the top 2% of fundraising income appeared to buck this trend. Significant examples emerged where schools, situated in areas of deprivation, were able to secure large amounts of philanthropic income. This paper explores how this has been achieved and what challenges remain.

## **Research Questions**

The review of the literature suggests some noteworthy trends emerging in terms of schools' ability to secure fundraised income, alongside barriers faced. However some primary schools

successfully secured larger amounts of philanthropic income despite the barriers they faced. Based on this, the process of reviewing the literature generated three questions:

- (1) What good practices have been adopted by some individual schools which help them achieve fundraising success?
- (2) What challenges have schools that are successful in securing larger amounts of philanthropic income, encountered?
- (3) What are the potential implications for practice based on these experiences?

## **Methodology**

This article seeks to build upon previous research studies by exploring the lived experiences and practices of three case study schools which sit within the top 2% of schools by fundraised income and achieved fundraising success. In doing so I hope to be able to shed light on successful fundraising practice in schools, fusing together theories of fundraising and practical lived examples, from which learning can be drawn (Stake, 1994; Yin, 1984).

Despite growing interest in fundraising in education, there is little literature which explores the lived experiences of schools engaging in this activity. Identified as the examination of examples in practice (Walker, 1980), case study research can draw attention to the complexities and lived experiences to provide better understanding (Stake, 1994). As previously highlighted, this research builds upon a recent research study examining the distribution of voluntary action across primary education (Body et al, 2016). The methodological approach of Body et al's research used financial analysis and survey data to provide statistical trend level data as an exploratory study on this topic. Case study analysis provides the 'polar opposite' (Scriven, 1991), facilitating the close examination of particular events or activities, in order to provide analytical understanding, alongside descriptive and detailed data (Dyer, 1995). With only 2% of the primary schools successfully securing over £50k per annum (Body et al, 2016), closer examination of the practices, challenges and experiences of these schools as 'instrumental case studies' (Stake, 1994) provides valuable insight into fundraising in primary schools that has not been captured elsewhere.

Criteria for selection as a case study was threefold, based upon the following factors:

- 1) This research is particularly interested in the lessons which can be learnt from schools securing higher amounts of fundraised income. Therefore, the first case study selection criteria was the requirement that the school sat within the top 2% of schools based on fundraised income in 2015/16.
- 2) As identified in the literature review, schools which drew pupils from areas of disadvantage and fell within the medium or high FSM bracket were likely to achieve, on average, lower amounts of philanthropic income per child per year. Therefore, the second criteria for case selection was based upon schools falling in the medium or high FSM brackets.
- 3) As this research was particularly concerned with how schools can overcome barriers to fundraising, schools were selected which demonstrated different approaches to fundraising to offer a range of comparative experiences from which to draw learning.

From these criteria three schools (see table 1) were selected as case studies, each situated in the south east of England. Each school was given a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. Once selected (and participation agreed) each school was visited and a semi-structured interview was carried out with the key member of staff holding fundraising responsibility for the school and projects supported by fundraised income were observed. In addition, the schools provided supplementary information about their fundraising activities, such as financial information sheets, strategic business plans, fundraising material, bid development work and copies of contracts and grant agreements.

| <b>Case Study</b>                  | <b>School type</b>       | <b>Size (as of 2016/17)</b> | <b>Fundraised income 2013-2016</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Robin Primary School</b>     | Academy                  | Medium (200-300 pupils)     | £160,000                           |
| <b>2. Wagtail Special School</b>   | Community Special School | Medium (200-300 pupils)     | £256,000                           |
| <b>3. Chaffinch Primary School</b> | Academy                  | Large (over 500 pupils)     | £177,500                           |

Table 1: Case study schools

### **Findings and Discussion**

Table 2 below outlines the key characteristics within each of the case study schools. These have been summarised under challenges faced and areas of good practice, which are explored further in the discussion below.

| <b>Case Study</b>               | <b>Areas of Good Practice</b>  | <b>Challenges Faced</b>  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Robin Primary School</b>     | <p>The school built on an established, long standing relationship with a medium sized voluntary sector organisation (VSO) which had previously supported some of their more vulnerable children. Approached by the VSO for an initial joint bid which was subsequently successful, the school and VSO then identified areas of need which met both the school and local community needs and the VSOs mission. The VSO led on large bids which met those shared needs, employed the relevant staff and delivered targeted interventions in the school and local community. Together the school and VSO targeted additional funding at school and community needs. Funding was targeted at meeting both individual children’s needs (for example emotional wellbeing support) as wider collective projects (such as family intervention work).</p> | <p>The School is located in an area of deprivation, and falls into the high FSM bracket. In 2011 it was placed in special measures. The school is based within a highly challenging, transient community which has experienced ongoing community conflict. The PTFA was ended by the school after complaints of bullying and long periods of inactivity. Fundraising then became the role of the deputy head teacher who had no prior experience in fundraising. Engaging parents and the community in fundraising remained a challenge.</p> |
| <b>Wagtail Special School</b>   | <p>The School employed a dedicated fundraiser, who headed up the friends’ association of the school (reg. charity) and had previous experience in fundraising. The fundraiser focused on charitable trusts, with some local business sponsorship. Each project is well researched and the ask is highly specific, incorporating collective needs of the school and individual needs of children. The fundraiser nurtured relationships with potential donors, which often paid off either one or two years later. Successful fundraising was acknowledged and celebrated in the school community and with parents/ carers. The school were clear to highlight how all funding was spent and not used to replace statutory funding.</p>   | <p>The School seeks fundraising to support a wide range of children with differing, multiple and complex needs (aged 4-19), requiring each ‘ask’ to be very specific and varied. The school is expanding, and requires fundraising income to support equipping the rooms. Expectations on the fundraiser are high. The school has almost 25% of pupils on FSMs, and attracts pupils from across a wide geographical area, so lacks a local community network from which to draw upon.</p>  |
| <b>Chaffinch Primary School</b> | <p>The school engaged and nurtured a collaborative relationship with a corporate partner invested in the local area. Based on this relationship the school was introduced to additional corporate supporters and continued to increase their philanthropic</p>   | <p>The school is located in a significant area of deprivation, falls into the high FSM band, and was placed in special measures in 2012. A new head-teacher took over the school in 2013, faced</p>  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>income. The school worked with the corporate partner to target funding to meet both school and community needs. The school sought to share their practice with other local schools and collaborate in fundraising efforts. The school were specific in ensuring that fundraised income went above and beyond statutory funding.</p> | <p>with budget reductions of almost 20%, he sought to increase the school's income. The school lacked significant parental and community engagement.</p> |
|--|--|--|

### ***Good Practice***

A common trend across the case studies was the focus on extending fundraising activities beyond PTA activities. As the Head-teacher of Chaffinch School commented:

*The PTA are great at drawing together the school community, running events for parents and raising bits of money, but we needed to go beyond the school gates to secure more income.*

As a result, each of the case study schools demonstrated different but successful and proactive approaches to fundraising. In response to the first research question set in this article, thematically analysing the case studies experiences revealed three prominent areas of good practice; 1) framing the ask, 2) building relationships and 3) adopting a community facing approach.

***Framing the 'ask':*** In all of the examples of fundraising provided by the schools, fundraising asks were specific and targeted to meet identified needs within the school community. Regardless of the source of income (charitable trusts, corporate partners, individual donors, etc) each school set out a particular and specific project that required support, for example the refurbishment of an early years outdoor play area (Chaffinch School), increased mental health support for specific children (Robin School) and inclusive play equipment to engage children with a range of abilities (Wagtail School). Whilst the case study schools highlighted deficits in their budget as putting pressure on the school, they were clear to focus fundraising asks on going beyond what state funding should cover. For example:

*We have the money to provide the absolute necessities but it really is now stripped back to the bone. Fundraising means we can provide all the bits around that, which support and enhance children's learning. (Deputy Head-teacher, Robin School)*

Therefore, this additional income meant that pressure was reduced on the school's core income by reducing pressures in the classroom, however none of the case studies used funding to directly support teaching costs. Instead fundraised income was used to equip rooms and areas, provide support for individual children, fund school trips, support early intervention services, provide community-based parental support, and support children's mental health services. Furthermore, the schools each used an effective combination of individual stories of children within the school, and the identification of collective needs to help secure fundraised income. For example, at Chaffinch School potential donors were shown around the school by children who discussed how they felt their school could be improved; whilst Robin School used individual case studies of vulnerable children to attract additional funding for early intervention support services. In addition, Wagtail school

attracted significant amounts of philanthropic funding from local sponsors to address individual children's needs including exercise equipment, communication devices and specialist teaching equipment.

**Building relationships:** It is notable that each of the case studies highlighted relationship building as a priority in their fundraising efforts, as the Deputy Head-teacher of Robin School commented:

*If we focus on the relationships the funding follows and is maintained, if we focus on the funding the relationship is never properly established and funding, if achieved is likely to be one-off.*

Therefore, each of the case studies focused on developing relationships with funders which were long term and sustained. For two of the case studies, Robin and Chaffinch School, this was primarily focused on a single or few funders, whilst Wagtail School successfully developed a number of relationships simultaneously. Each of the schools sought to develop and nurture these relationships to their benefit, securing increased funding year on year. For example, Chaffinch School trebled their annual fundraised income between 2013 and 2016. Robin and Wagtail School both showed year on year increased philanthropic income as they achieved ongoing and increased support from nurtured relationships, as the Head-teacher of Chaffinch School commented:

*We want people who donate to feel invested in the school, I would rather they got to know us really well before they gave us any money, even if that means waiting years. But I know once they do know us, they see the great work we can do, they see how we can help change this community from the grassroots up, well then they will keep coming back. That's what we've seen so far.*

Furthermore, whilst each of the case study schools sought to build individual relationships with funders, they also sought to support other schools in increasing their fundraising income. For example, Robin School collaborated locally with another school to bid for funding to meet a shared community need.

**Community facing:** Responding to local community needs which impacted the school environment whilst simultaneously supporting children's education, is at the heart of much of the fundraising success. For example, Robin School highlighted difficulties in engaging parents in fundraising or volunteering in the school. They faced some significant local community conflicts, which they felt were impacting on school performance. The school therefore focused their fundraising on tackling some of these issues by supporting early intervention and the emotional wellbeing of the children in the school. This was achieved through funding one-to-one and group intervention programmes, additional support for parents, community engagement activities and training courses for parents, through a collaborative partnership with a children's charity. This significantly reduced pressures in the classrooms and helped increase teacher capacity, as the school explained:

*The issues facing this community are huge, and those issues impact our school. I think we see it as dealing with source of problems rather than the consequences we see in the children. By working with the charity, we can support community development, help them access hard-to-reach families and benefit our children all in one sweep.*

Chaffinch School adopted a similar approach providing, through philanthropic income, financial management advice and employment advice for parents of children in their community as part of a business education package offered throughout the school. Furthermore, they identified opportunities where fundraised income had dual benefits of supporting the educational attainment of children whilst supporting the community needs, for example the provision of a new early years play area as part of the pre-school, increased the pre-school capacity in an area lacking early childcare provision.

### ***Challenges Faced***

By definition of selection, each of the case study schools sat in the top 2% of primary schools based on fundraised income (Body et al, 2016) however, despite being objectively successful, each of the schools encountered challenges. In response to the second question set out in this article, the challenges faced by the case study schools fall into three main areas; 1) lack of a whole school approach; 2) skills shortage; and 3) reluctant fundraising.

***Lack of a whole school approach:*** Within each of the case study schools the individuals tasked with fundraising differed. However, in each of these cases the individuals expressed difficulties in managing competing priorities. This individualised responsibility, accompanied by a lack of whole school approach, meant each case study remained concerned regarding the sustainability of the fundraising relationships they had developed if they were to leave the school. Within both Robin and Chaffinch School the role of fundraiser was an add-on to a senior position, with the functions and responsibility almost exclusively sitting with the Deputy Head-teacher and Head-teacher respectively. As the Deputy Head-teacher at Robin School commented:

*Our PTA was problematic, it got so difficult we had to shut it down. Now all fundraising comes down, well sort of to me I suppose. The board [governors] like what we do but support comes in the form of signing off projects and that's about it. And it's not as if it is on my job description – this joins the long list of things that fall into 'other duties'.*

However, Wagtail school employed a fundraiser whose sole role was to fundraise for particular projects identified by the school, which may go some way to explain their higher level of fundraised income. However, whilst Wagtail School's decision to invest in a fundraiser demonstrated a good return on investment, a lack of knowledge and awareness about the fundraising process across the school led to unrealistic expectations on the success of their fundraiser, who commented:

*I think they think I've got a magic wand! They [senior management] say we need this and we need that, and I think they think I'll just magic up the money.... It doesn't work like that. I have to plan the project, cost it out, identify the best funders and then start the approach. It's made worse by the fact we've had a few quick wins, but they were lucky chances, not because fundraising is easy.*

Indeed, within each of the schools, individuals highlighted a lack of awareness across the wider management and leadership team of the school about how long fundraising processes could take, the benefit of long-term investment in relationships and the ratio of unsuccessful

asks versus successful asks. Such misunderstandings caused tensions for all three of the case studies.

**Skill Shortage:** Each of the schools felt they had increased their fundraising skills and confidence over the past three years (2013-2016), demonstrated by the year-on-year increase in their total fundraised income. However, they each felt this had been a *'steep learning curve'* (Fundraiser, Wagtail School) in terms of skills and knowledge, which were predominantly self-taught through trial and error. The fundraiser within Wagtail school had some previous experience in managing fundraising processes, bid development and working with charitable trusts. Similarly, the Deputy Head-teacher at Robin School had a long-established relationship with their charitable partner and the Head-teacher at Chaffinch School built upon an existing relationship with the corporate partner. Each sought to build on their individual experience within their 'comfort zone'. Though Wagtail school was actively exploring other sources of fundraising, Robin and Chaffinch Schools were reluctant to expand their fundraising reach, citing a lack of skills and knowledge about fundraising in different ways as the primary reason, closely followed by a lack of time. For example, as the Head-teacher at Chaffinch school commented:

*I understand business, so working with a business partner made sense to me – I know what makes them tick and we meet each others needs. They wanted to develop their social responsibility arm, whilst supporting people who are likely to be their future workforce and customers. I don't really know anything about other forms of fundraising, so no we've not looked in those directions. Maybe we will in the future.*

Whilst the Deputy Head-teacher at Robin school reflected:

*We've been working with the charity for a long time, it started by them coming in to help us and grew from there, so I don't really see it as fundraising in a traditional sense, and I wouldn't feel confident to write a funding bid on my own or go and ask a business for money. We just made the best use of the opportunities available to us – that's what I know how to do.*

This was in keeping with wider research findings which highlight that schools perceived that a lack of skills, knowledge and expertise in fundraising inhibits their attempts to fundraise, and in the main fundraising took place as a voluntary activity within the PTA's (Body et al, 2016).

**Reluctant fundraising:** The findings suggest that the case study schools in this research have become *'reluctant fundraisers'* (Head-teacher, Chaffinch School). Two of the case study schools felt that the role of fundraising could be seen to 'support a corporatisation of education' (Head-teacher, Chaffinch School) and could lead to unequal distribution of resources. For these fundraising was rarely celebrated within the school community or well-publicised. For example:

*We don't really publicise the relationship [with the charity] as it sort of says we have lots of needs in our school which we can't deal with so need extra money. I'm not sure that's a selling point for the school – being too poor to cope, is it? (Deputy Head-teacher Robin school)*

Wagtail school was the exception to this, firstly by being the only school to have a ‘fundraiser’ role and secondly by openly sharing and celebrating their fundraising successes. Thus, they received additional philanthropic income because of donors being more aware of their efforts through publicising their successes and current projects. However, as fundraising income was mainly targeted at ensuring the additional needs of children with multiple and complex learning and health requirements were being met as fully as possible, the fundraising narrative was perhaps an exception to mainstream education needs. Nevertheless, even within Wagtail school the fundraiser reflected:

*In an ideal world schools shouldn't have to fundraise, the money should be there and dispersed where it is most needed – but that's not the reality. The reality is, if we want to provide the best for our children we have to bring in extra, but it doesn't feel like a fair system.*

In addition, each school secured a significant amount of gifts-in-kind as a result of their fundraising efforts, this included trips away, training days, learning experience days, competition prizes, etc. However this was rarely recognised as a financial contribution, meaning this ‘hidden income’ was not included in their overall fundraised income figures. Thus, the figures reported by the case study schools under-represent the true value of the fundraising efforts.

### **Implications for Practice**

In response to the final research question set in this article and drawing together the analysis of the literature review, the research findings, the strengths and challenges encountered, I suggest as schools seek to increase their fundraised income, consideration of the following four implications can help them achieve their goal.

**Pro-actively fundraising:** As demonstrated by the case study schools, fundraising does not occur without a concerted effort. For schools to achieve fundraising success they need to pro-actively engage in fundraising, this means having strategic and operational commitment across the school which can be achieved in three ways. Firstly, as almost all donations occur as a response to an ask (Bryant et al, 2003), for schools to achieve fundraised income they must proactively ask donors for support (Wieping and Maas, 2009). Furthermore, by being specific in this ask and facilitating donors to donate to specific projects, schools are likely to attract increased amounts of fundraised income (Bachke et al, 2014). Secondly, whilst fundraising may be centrally coordinated by one or few individuals, it should not be the sole responsibility of that one individual with school or the PTA. Where schools fundraising activities were left solely to the PTA, schools rarely secured more than £10k per annum (Body et al, 2016). Instead fundraising should be a collective response supported by all areas of the school. Indeed, Bell and Cornelius (2013) suggest that when most people in the organisation engage in relationship building, and that in turn, the systems within the organisation support donors’ organisations can increase their fundraised income. Thirdly, for schools to maximise their fundraised income they need to maximise existing opportunities, as well as seek new ones. In doing so schools can explore a range of fundraising approaches (i.e. individual donors, events, charitable trusts, corporate partners, etc) and tailor the fundraising approaches to suit the school and local community needs.

***Investing in people and skills:*** The case study schools included in this research highlights lack of skills as a challenge to achieving fundraising success. This is reflected in wider research which highlights that though schools wish to increase their fundraised income, they feel inhibited to fully pursue this due to a lack of time, skills and knowledge (Body et al, 2016). Therefore, successful fundraising attempts tended to grow out of existing opportunities from within the current structure of the school, as demonstrated by the case studies, and are led by an individual for whom this is an ‘add-on’ to their main duties. To maximise existing opportunities and identify additional opportunities, schools, as fundraising organisations, need to consider how to equip individuals tasked with fundraising with the appropriate time, skills and knowledge to fundraise (Pharoah et al, 2014), alongside supporting a wider understanding of fundraising across the school to ensure that expectations remain realistic.

***Creating a fundraising narrative:*** Closely tied to taking a pro-active approach to fundraising, creating a positive narrative for schools fundraising is necessary in terms of attracting funds. This is important both internally to the school and externally with partners. Internally, schools need to celebrate and acknowledge their fundraising successes, including both monetary income and gifts-in-kind. Highlighting these successes supports the development of a fundraising culture across the school and can help overcome the challenges caused by ‘reluctant fundraising’. In terms of external partners, Payne (1998) suggests that fundraised income can be ‘crowded out’ by other income sources, as such schools wishing to fundraise can frame their story in the context of depleting budgets both in terms of school (West, 2014) and wider community budgets (Ball et al, 2012), whilst highlighting how additional funding is used to go above and beyond statutory funding obligations, rather than simply replace government funding (Breeze, 2013).

***Identifying dual benefits:*** The case study examples suggest that schools are potentially able to secure increased fundraising income when the school is placed at the heart of the community, and fundraising is able to have a ‘dual benefit’, meeting both educational and community needs. As Ball et al (2012) highlight, cuts to public and voluntary sector providers are placing increased pressure on schools as wider community support diminishes. Part of the case study schools’ fundraising efforts have been to find new ways to fund work addressing these issues, for example funding early intervention and emotional wellbeing support, resulting in schools occupying positions both in education and social welfare provision. This may be explained by increasing the perceived efficacy of the funding and thus encouraging donors to give more (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2007).

## **Conclusion**

This article has attempted to expand the discussion concerning fundraising in education. In doing so, it has questioned how some schools secure greater fundraised income, despite appearing to face increased barriers such as lacking active community support and being situated in areas of economic deprivation. This article does not attempt to deal with the ideological contention which rises from the increased pressure on schools to find alternative sources of funding in response to depleting budgets (West, 2014), or the increased pressure felt by schools due to cuts in community based support services (Ball et al, 2012). Instead it attempts to understand the pragmatic solutions that schools have pursued in responding to

these challenges. Each of the case studies demonstrates good practice by being pro-active in their approaches to fundraising, including being highly specific and focused with funding requests, building and nurturing relationships with funders and seeking dual benefits which meet both school and wider community needs in their fundraising activities.

Nonetheless, though relatively successful in their fundraising efforts, they still identified challenges, including lacking a whole school approach, feeling deficit in skills and knowledge to pursue fundraised income and a reluctance to embrace fundraising as a positive way forwards. Therefore, by drawing on both the good practice and challenges faced we can attempt to identify 'what works' for schools trying to increase their fundraised income. As a result, this article suggests that schools which, pro-actively focus on their fundraising by taking a whole school approach, invest in people both in terms of time and skills and create a positive fundraising narrative which embraces both the schools and local communities' needs, are more likely to secure a higher level of fundraised income.

This research is not without its limitations. As a qualitative case study analysis it is limited in scope and generalisability, however it raises a number of significant questions. One of these questions must be, should schools be expected to fundraise for additional income? If so, how can schools be supported in achieving this? Further research is also required to draw out the policy intent and implications of increased philanthropic funding for schools, and indeed other similar public services, and the impacts this may have on wider debates about resource distribution.

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