

Impact and Improved Outcomes for Young People

In May 2010, Hanover Partnership for Schools and Academies appointed EdisonLearning as its education partner, so ensuring all Hanover schools benefit from the expert support of the world's leading school improvement organisation.

EdisonLearning's credentials in this field are both exceptional and unique.

As a pioneer provider of Charter Schools in the USA

EdisonLearning has been involved in the operation of Charter Schools in the USA since 1995, and has exceptional experience of supporting partner organisations through the processes of opening and operating a new school, and building the capacity to ensure that each new school is able to operate successfully to meet the needs of its community.

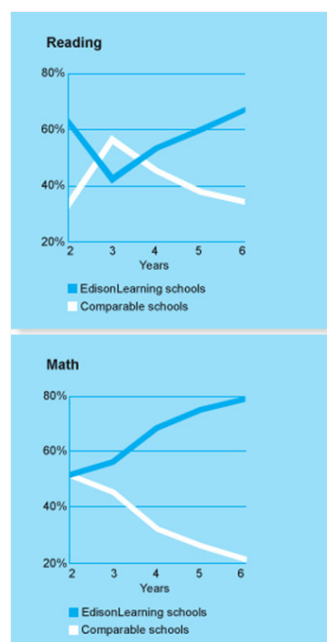
The majority of schools operated by EdisonLearning in the USA serve areas of high deprivation, where unemployment and adult illiteracy present significant challenge for schools and teachers to address. Against this background, EdisonLearning has consistently worked to drive achievement to new levels, providing students with previously unattainable life opportunities.

EdisonLearning's work in the USA has been monitored and audited by the RAND Corporation since the late 1990s. In 2005, RAND published a formal and detailed analysis of the performance of EdisonLearning – the first such study of a school operating organisation. This provided firm evidence that schools under EdisonLearning's management, over time, outperformed their statistical neighbours.

Transforming the fortunes of struggling schools

Evidence of EdisonLearning's track record in supporting the turnaround of struggling schools can now be seen across three continents – Europe, the Middle East and in America, but it is in England where some of the most compelling evidence of impact can be seen.

Thorpe Bay High School, in Southend had been in Special Measures for more than 5 years when EdisonLearning were asked to begin the process of supporting its turnaround. Over that time, three head teachers had left, the governing body had been dissolved, and a wide range of interventions, often at significant cost to the school and the local authority, had been introduced, but to no avail.



Source: RAND Corporation report, "Inspiration, Perspiration, and Time," October 2005, y1 analysis

Working closely with the new head teacher to implement a coherent programme to transform standards and systems across the school, EdisonLearning were successful in bringing the school out of Special Measures in just 16 months, and entirely out of an Ofsted category after a further 12 months.

Today, as Futures College, with the recent opening of a major new facility, the school is setting out on the next phase of its transformation as a pioneer in vocational and practical, hands-on education.

Turin Grove School, located in Edmonton, North London, addresses a very different community to Futures College, but shared many of the same issues. The school had been in Special Measures, prior to EdisonLearning's appointment, but was improving. Attainment, however remained extremely low, and the school faced many other challenges, such as poor attendance and behaviour.

In 2007, EdisonLearning were appointed to take on the operation of the school for a 3-year period, and were tasked with raising achievement, improving attendance, and managing the reorganisation of the school onto a single site. By the end of the period, all of these outcomes had been achieved, and the school was shown to be performing within the top quartile against similar schools, with a CVA rating of 1018.

And in the Middle East, EdisonLearning are working with Joint Venture partner Taaleem to support the improvement of four state-funded secondary schools in Abu Dhabi. Employing principles and processes utilised in supporting schools in England, significant improvement has been noted across all four schools. An evaluation conducted by the Abu Dhabi Education Council noted:

'The partnership is working well ... involves the whole school in both the planning and delivery of the school improvement plan. Strong foundations have been set for further improvement of the school, and its work with students, staff and community.'

Making the journey from good to great

The skills and expertise required to take an underperforming to a satisfactory judgement by Ofsted are quite different to those needed to move a good school to 'Outstanding', and it is perhaps a far more challenging task to undertake the journey to excellence. However, EdisonLearning have worked with a number of schools specifically to provide the new thinking and innovation that can provide the key to a new level of operational capability and performance.

Samuel Ward Arts and Technology College in Suffolk is an example of one such school. It has a strong history as an innovative and energetic school for teachers and students with the highest possible aspirations for students; and yet its inspection ratings remained at 'good'.

EdisonLearning were engaged to support the school towards this goal; a 3-year partnership with a clear end result – an Outstanding judgement. The process – to analyse and improve all aspects of the school's operations so that they focused completely on the needs of students. The result – as Ofsted put it:

“This is an outstanding school. It provides an excellent learning environment in which students feel safe and valued. The school genuinely puts the needs of learners first”

Already judged as Outstanding in its 2006 Ofsted, the school committed to moving beyond that rating, responding to an HMI's advice who commented “its time to lift the lid off this place”. EdisonLearning were the organisation who helped the team at Shenley to achieve this. Commenting after the school had received its next inspection, deputy head Chris Holmwood commented

“The inspectors told us that the depth of the debate about improving learning and the way it is articulated here is exceptional. EdisonLearning's work with us has played a significant part in this achievement.”

And it is the same challenge that now faces the staff and leadership team at Lyons Hall Primary School in Essex. From a position of 'causing concern' to the local authority in 2003, Lyons Hall was judged to be Outstanding by a team of inspectors in 2009. The inspectors' letter to the students put it rather well: “Thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited you recently. We were very impressed by the level of maturity in the way you all conduct yourselves. You are obviously very proud of what you do in school. We really appreciated the large number of you who came up to talk and to share your work with us. We thoroughly enjoyed listening to what you had to say. You are all excellent ambassadors for Lyons Hall and the way you go about your work and play helped us decide just how outstanding your school is.

“You go to an excellent school and you spoke highly of your time here. All staff work very well together to provide you with a high quality education. You make excellent progress in lessons, and reach high standards in a very wide range of subjects.”

Lyons Hall started working with EdisonLearning back in 2003, and the collaboration with this fine school continues to this day.

Building a network of strong schools

One of the great strengths of EdisonLearning's approach is that it recognises, to quote Kay Gerrett or Cedar Road Primary School in Northampton, that “no one can be as good as all of us together”. Where schools collaborate in a true partnership, everyone wins – not least the students.

In Northampton, EdisonLearning have taken the concept of collaboration to a new level by working with the Area Improvement Partnership, which represents almost all of the schools in the town, on a range of projects to improve the quality of provision for everyone. Much of the work undertaken with the Northampton schools is the similar to the experiences of Lyons Hall, Thorpe Bay and others, but what is different is that teachers and leaders from across the town come together to share in the experience of learning and improving together. From this has come enjoyable and fulfilling professional development, the creation of a strong professional community, and significantly improved outcomes for learners – a 30% improvement in performance at Key Stage 4, and at level 2, an average improvement of more than 5% at Level 4 in English, maths and science after one year of partnership

“EdisonLearning's work with us has played a significant part in this achievement

 **Hanover Partnership for Schools and Academies**