The importance of education is often lost on many compulsory school-age pupils participating in the process, particularly the lowest 20% that do not attain even the basic level of literacy and numeracy needed to gain sustainable employment, a fundamental requirement for economic and social prosperity in this country (Impetus, 2014). In 2011 Professor Sonia Blandford founded Achievement for All 3As, a Social Enterprise charity, with the aim of transforming the lives of vulnerable children, young people and their families, including those with SEND, by raising their educational aspirations, access and achievement. This paper considers the growth and impact of the charity from its early beginnings through its development and its current position as a key part of government education reform; by 2013 it had grown from its initial 3 staff to over 500, reaching over 1,000,000 pupils across England and in Norway and America. Social enterprise status has been a strong contributory factor; there is a sustained and clear focus on social and moral purpose. The research question addressed in this paper is the relationship between social enterprise and the delivery of high impact programmes in schools.

The research literature focuses on national policy (DfE, 2011, 2012, 2014), charity growth (PwC, 2012, Blandford and Knowles, 2013) and social enterprise (Guardian 2012). The theoretical framework focuses on impact analysis (case studies, quantitative data and personal testimonies). The story began in 2008 when Brian Lamb OBE was commissioned by the then Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families to make recommendations on how to increase the attainment and achievement of young people with SEND. The recommendations published in the Lamb Inquiry into Parental Confidence in Special Education Needs (2009) became the foundations of the Achievement for All charity and programme.

Research findings indicate that Achievement for All 3As has delivered a successful social enterprise model with profound impact on the educational outcomes, including 50 - 330% gain in reading, writing and maths. Research findings also reflect the strength of the partnerships between schools and a social enterprise in terms of secondment and recruitment of staff and quality delivery.

The contribution to knowledge of this paper is significant in terms of evidencing the impact of the social enterprise model and impact.