

Extra-Curricular Sport Evaluation

Final Report



August 2017

Report produced for the Youth Sport Trust

About *spear*

The Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (*spear*) is located within the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences at Canterbury Christ Church University. *spear* undertakes a range of evidence-led analyses, from critical commentaries and reflections on current policy and practice, to commissioned research, evaluation and consultancy.

The Centre's research is funded by a range of national and international funders such as the International Olympic Committee, World Health Organisation, Terre des Hommes, Department of Health, Department for Education, English Federation for Disability Sport, Mencap, Access Sport, Youth Sport Trust, UK Sport, Sports Coach UK, Sport England and Sport Wales. Recent work has focused on sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing in schools and communities.

Research conducted by *spear* has helped guide and inform public policy by contributing to the wider evidence base used by policy makers, providing a rationale for government and commercial investment, and steering programme improvements that enhance the experience of practitioners and participants.

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Extra-Curricular Sport evaluation undertaken by *spear* and commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust. Report produced by *spear*.

August 2017



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Context

Recent policies and strategies highlight the crucial role of early development of fundamental movement skills, motivation and confidence (physical literacy) in enhancing behaviours and attitudes in and to physical activity and sport.¹ However, recognition amongst the adult school workforce of the value of increasing, not just levels of physical activity among young people but, confidence and motivation to sustain activity through the lifecourse² is often partnered with insufficient knowledge and training for teachers and the wider school workforce to provide the means to achieving this.³ In addition it is important to recognise the key role of PE and school sport coaches in the modern school workforce. The relationship between coaching and teaching is symbiotic⁴ yet sometimes fractious. While external coaches bring knowledge and expertise to the school workforce, issues of sustainability and de-skilling arise where this knowledge and expertise is not integrated within the school through dissemination and mentoring. While the PE and Sport Premium provides financial resources to primary schools, guidance and support in relation to the development of physical literacy is limited and school's ability to demonstrate sustainability of provision requires the dissemination of knowledge and expertise within schools.

About the programme

The Extra-Curricular Sport programme aims to address these issues through the provision of training and resources to the wider school workforce to enhance the sustainability of teaching, learning and the provision of high quality sporting and physical activity opportunities in schools.

The programme is funded by Sport England and delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST). It aims to supplement the minimal PE, school sport and physical activity training currently received by primary school teachers and the wider workforce, to facilitate the provision of high quality sport and physical activity developmental opportunities. Extra-Curricular Sport comprises training and resources for the YST's Skills2Play programme and training in Coach Mentoring. The wider workforce in primary schools (teachers, teaching assistants, apprentices, lunchtime supervisors and parents) is provided with training and resources for Skills2Play (for

Key programme aims

1. Increase positive attitudes towards physical activity among young people.
2. Increase physical wellbeing and physical literacy of young people.
3. Increase wellbeing of young people (health, happiness, confidence).
4. Improve personal development (life skills, leadership skills, CARE* and character traits of young people).
5. Increase competence and motivation of adult workforce in schools.
6. Increase confidence of adult workforce in using physical activity and sport to deliver high quality opportunities for young people of all abilities.
7. Increase partnership working among national stakeholders.

*Creativity, Aspirations, Resilience, Empathy.

¹ Department of Culture, Media and Sport (2015) Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Action Nation. London: DCMS; Sport England (2016) Towards an Active Nation. London: Sport England

² *spear* (2013-16) Skills2Play/Sport Evaluations; *spear* (2010-2016) Change4Life Evaluations.

³ Kirk, K. (2012) The Future for Primary Physical Education. *Journal of Pedagogic Development*. 2 (1).

⁴ Cassidy, T., Jones, R. and Potrac, P. (2008) Understanding Sports Coaching. The social, cultural and pedagogical foundations of coaching practice. London: Routledge

delivery with Key Stage 1 and 2 children). The aim of Skills2Play training is to improve the competence and confidence of members of the primary school workforce to provide children with extra-curricular sport opportunities that develop multi skills and abilities and engage inactive children. The Coach Mentor training is provided for coaches and PE specialists working in schools, and aims to enhance sustainable quality provision through increasing their skills, competence and confidence to mentor members of the wider school workforce.

About the evaluation

spear was commissioned from January 2017 to August 2017 to conduct an independent evaluation of Extra-Curricular Sport. The evaluation was designed to assess the impact of the programme on key outcomes and to provide insight into processes to inform programme delivery and development.

The research focuses on the impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on the school workforce and how this impact has been achieved. Data informing this Final Report are drawn from 62 workforce survey responses, telephone interviews with 11 workforce members, site visits to 3 schools in which Skills2Play or Coach Mentoring is being delivered, and to 1 Skills2Play training event.

The report is divided into two substantive sections: Outcome Evaluation exploring programme impact, and Process Evaluation presenting insight into ways in which impact has been achieved. Key Findings are presented, representing both successes and challenges encountered by programme participants, and Recommendations are provided. The report includes 4 mini-case studies and appendices comprise 3 interactive case studies, which follow the Extra-Curricular Sport journeys of members of the school workforce.

Table 1 summarises the evaluation approach for Extra-Curricular Sport.

Key research questions

1. *What is the impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on the adult workforce, young participants, schools and their partnerships?*
2. *How have any of the outcomes for the adult workforce, young participants and schools been achieved?*

Table 1. Programme evaluation

	Research	Sample
School Workforce Survey	Online survey of school workforce members to explore experiences and perceptions of impact Survey designed by <i>spear</i> and facilitated by Youth Sport Trust	Responses from 62 school workforce members (MME* circa +/-12%)
School Workforce Telephone Interviews	Telephone interviews with members of school workforce to complement site visits and inform mini case studies	Telephone interviews with 11 workforce members (8 delivering Skills2Play and 3 Coach Mentoring) in 10 schools
Mini Case Studies	Telephone interviews with members of school workforce to explore experiences and perceptions of impact	Telephone interviews with 5 workforce members (3 delivering Skills2Play and 2 Coach Mentoring) in 4 schools
Multimedia Case Studies	Site visits to schools, including interviews with school workforce members, to create interactive case studies capturing process of delivery and impact	Site visits to: – St John’s Catholic Primary School (Skills2Play) – Dashwood Primary Academy (Coach Mentoring) – Curwen Primary School (Skills2Play)
Additional Site Visit	Site visit to Youth Sport Trust training event to gain insight into experiences and perceptions of delegates	Site visit to: – YST Skills2Play training event
Hopes & Fears Flipchart	Flipchart activity at training events to explore delegates objectives and attitudes towards participation Activity designed by <i>spear</i> and facilitated by Youth Sport Trust	Hopes & Fears data collected at 1 event ‘What went well’ data from 1 event Comments on resources from 1 event

*Maximum Margin of Error (MME)

The MME shows the level of accuracy the participant sample has; the smaller the MME, the greater the accuracy. It is calculated at the standard 95% confidence level so we can be 95% confident that the sample results reflect the population results to within the MME. An MME of +/-12% means that the maximum range in percentage responses to the survey (for all delegates beyond the sample) is within +/-12% of the percentages stated by the sample.

Evaluation Objectives

1. *Explore programme impact on workforce members’ competence, motivation and confidence to deliver high quality physical activity and sport opportunities for young people of all abilities.*
2. *Explore workforce perceptions of programme impact on levels of and attitudes towards physical activity, physical literacy, wellbeing and personal development of young participants.*
3. *Explore the impact on whole school outcomes and stakeholder partnerships.*
4. *Explore the adult workforce perceptions and experiences of Extra-Curricular Sport training, implementation and dissemination.*
5. *Explore workforce perceptions of key challenges and successes.*

Outcome Evaluation

School workforce participants in the programme and the research include teachers, student teachers, apprentices, lunchtime supervisors and coaches working in schools. This section explores the impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on their confidence, competence, knowledge and skills. It also presents workforce members' perceptions of impact on young participants to whom they are delivering the programme and on broader whole school outcomes.

Workforce Aspirations

Coach Mentoring delegates reported at training that they hoped to improve their understanding of the mentoring process and receive guidance in undertaking this, develop skills and confidence in effective mentoring and gain strategies for upskilling other members of the workforce to deliver physical activity and sport in schools. Their concerns on engagement with the programme centre around finding people to mentor who are willing and able to allocate time, taking on additional workload, and embarrassment around videoing their work.

For Skills2Play delegates, aspirations include increasing confidence, knowledge and skills, gaining new ideas and improving inclusive physical activity offer. Again, additional workload was perceived as a potential issue with the programme, as was attendance and retention of participants in clubs and gaining sufficient equipment and resources to run the programme.



In 2016/17, Youth Sport Trust has trained:

549 school workforce members in Extra-Curricular Sport, comprising...

201 apprentices

191 student teachers

89 teachers

40 coaches &

28 lunchtime supervisors

“

I hope to become a better mentor to help support the teaching and learning of children and teachers I work with.

Coach Mentoring delegate

“

I think the course will improve my confidence loads. You get more resources and things and can start to combine with stuff.

Skills2Play delegate

“

It looks so much more fun than what we've done before.

Skills2Play delegate

Impact on workforce members

This section explores the impact on workforce members' competence, motivation and confidence to deliver high quality physical activity and sport opportunities for young people of all abilities. Participants were also asked to comment on their perceptions of programme impact on young people (attitudes towards physical activity, physical literacy, wellbeing and personal development), and on whole school outcomes and partnerships. Data from the workforce survey (figure 1) and telephone interviews suggest that Extra-Curricular Sport is being delivered by a wide range of school workforce members, including coaches, teachers, teaching assistants, school sport partnership managers, sports delivery officers, student teachers and apprentices.

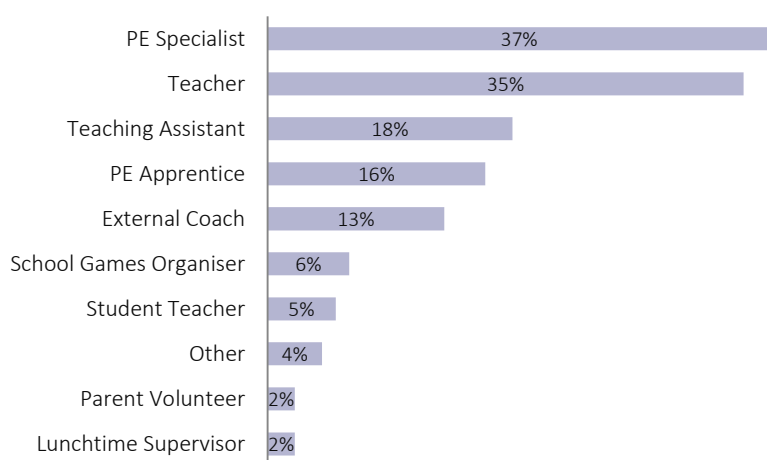


Figure 1. Workforce survey respondents' role in school (n=62)

Nearly all respondents to the workforce survey (figure 2) report that Extra-Curricular Sport training and programme has increased their skills and knowledge (97%), enhanced their motivation (96%) and developed their confidence (94%).

Q. How far has the training and programme helped you to...?

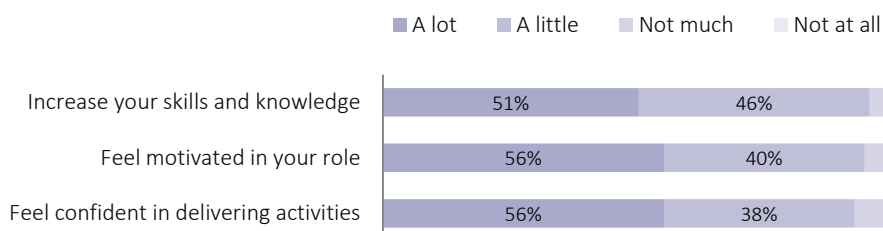


Figure 2. Impact of Extra-Curricular Sport training and programme (n=62)

“

Confidence and competence in teaching PE has improved in the school.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

They (YST) have given me more ideas that I can use in my session in the future.

Workforce survey respondent

“

It really helped me to build relationships with people that I now understand.

Coach Mentor

“

I feel more confident in all the sessions I teach.

Workforce survey respondent

“

I think the course as a whole helped me in reflecting on my own practices and challenging myself in looking at ways of developing further. This has had a natural effect on how I manage my staff in the workplace and am able to mentor them in their coaching roles.

Workforce survey respondent

All research participants interviewed commented positively on these aspects of impact to varying degrees. Less experienced members of the workforce who attended Skills2Play training (apprentices, teaching assistants) report that the programme has increased their confidence by giving them ideas and activities for delivery and by upskilling them to be able to interact and work confidently with larger groups of children. More confident workforce members (teachers, PE specialists) comment positively on the programme's provision of opportunities to refresh ideas and approaches to delivery of sport and physical activity, with new and inclusive ideas and resources.

Coach Mentors similarly report that, while already confident in delivering activities, the programme has provided them with opportunities to reflect on current practice and enhance their communication skills, adding value to the services they provide to schools by enabling them to upskill other members of the school workforce. Used to retaining ownership of PE and club delivery in schools, they have begun to bring in other members of the workforce (primarily teachers), by listening to their needs, developing lesson plans which gradually incorporate teachers in delivery, building teachers' motivation and ability to co-deliver and eventually deliver independently. Coach Mentors report that the programme has increased their awareness of potential barriers to teachers' engagement and enhanced their ability to communicate effectively with teachers, which in turn has increased their knowledge and understanding of school workforce needs and informed their service provision.



“

The big take away for me from the mentorship course is getting them (teachers) to own it. There's no good me coming down and saying 'you need to do this and improve that to do this', it's got to be me facilitating them on a journey to learning better. You can see the impact that has on the teachers, you can see how they really take ownership of that and they enjoy seeing their development. I've been getting really positive feedback from that.

Coach Mentor

“

They (children) are very enthusiastic about it. I think they have fun which hopefully is changing their perspective a bit on getting outside and doing some activity...it is helping their confidence. It feels good to see the kids having fun and enjoying games which in a normal class setting they might not get involved in.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Skills2Play's been really good at getting children who wouldn't normally be involved in clubs involved. The activities lend themselves nicely to that kind of target group.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Great links to PSHCE curriculum with team building and working together.

Skills2Play deliverer

Impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on school workforce



Source: adult school workforce participants (spear research, 2017)

Impact on participants, schools and partners

Data from telephone interviews and site visits suggest that deliverers are in the early stages of implementing the programme in schools and are not yet fully confident in commenting on impact on young participants. However, their perceptions suggest that Extra-Curricular Sport is having a positive impact on children’s physical literacy, wellbeing and personal development. Workforce survey data concurs (figure 3)⁵; almost all respondents report that the programme has helped to enhance children’s confidence and attitudes towards physical activity, as well as positively impacting on broader outcomes including happiness, resilience, empathy with their peers and creativity.

Q. How far have the sessions you’ve delivered helped participating children to...?

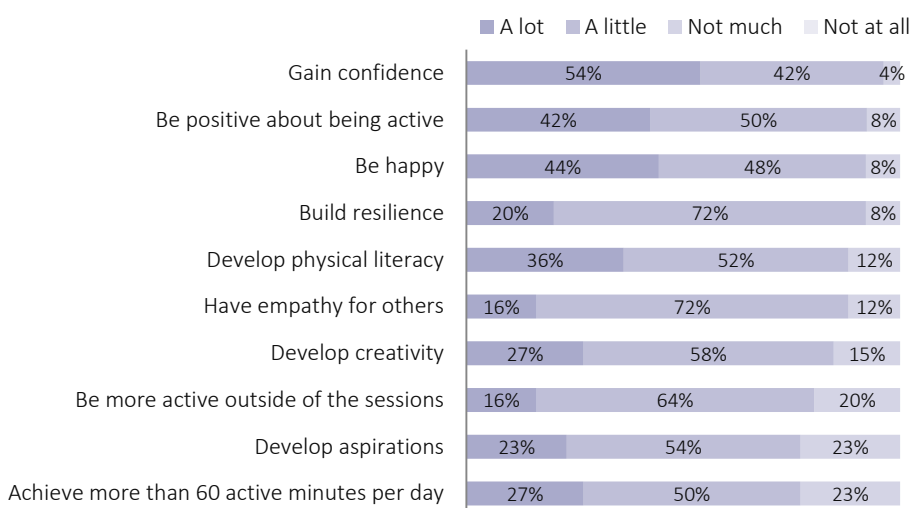


Figure 3. Impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on young participants (n=18)

The increase in children’s confidence and positive attitudes in turn is seen to have a positive impact on their physical activity levels, with 80% of respondents reporting that Extra-Curricular Sport sessions have encouraged children to be more active beyond the sessions; 77% of respondents believe that sessions have helped children to achieve the recommended 60 active minutes per day.⁶ In addition, some commend the programme for its application across the curriculum, particularly in relation to personal development, highlighting team-working and leadership as transferrable skills that Skills2Play develops.

Schools that are working with their School Sport Partnership in delivery of Skills2Play report that this collaboration has a positive impact on their confidence and competence, with ownership of sessions being incrementally passed to teachers and teaching assistants. Coach Mentors

⁵ While survey data provides indication of impact, response numbers are small and should therefore be treated with caution.

⁶ Department of Health (2011). Start Active, Stay Active – A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries’ Chief Medical Officers.

“

Young people’s attitudes to getting involved with sport had changed and they actually enjoyed taking part.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Skills2Play blends in with other activities that you do so you couldn’t get an idea of the impact specifically from Skills2Play activities because that activity’s really similar to something in PE anyway.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Some teachers tell me they really didn’t like PE, they didn’t want to teach PE. After working with me, they feel more confident. They understand more about themselves and why they didn’t like it. I’ve got some really good feedback.

Coach Mentor

“

It’s hard to gauge impact on the kids because I do a 10 week programme and then go.

Coach Mentor

“

The TAs gained skills and knowledge that they may not have had and the children have enjoyed the sessions. They were really keen to come back and do them again...it’s improved their physical literacy.

School Sports Partnership
Development Manager
(Skills2Play)

report that their enhanced understanding and communication skills have facilitated relationship building with the school workforce.

Most respondents to the workforce survey report that the Extra-Curricular Sport training and programme has added value to whole school outcomes, including PE and cross-curricular delivery and wider healthy lifestyle offer (figure 4), with a third believing the programme has enhanced community provision.

Q. How far has Coach Mentoring or Skills2Play added value to...?

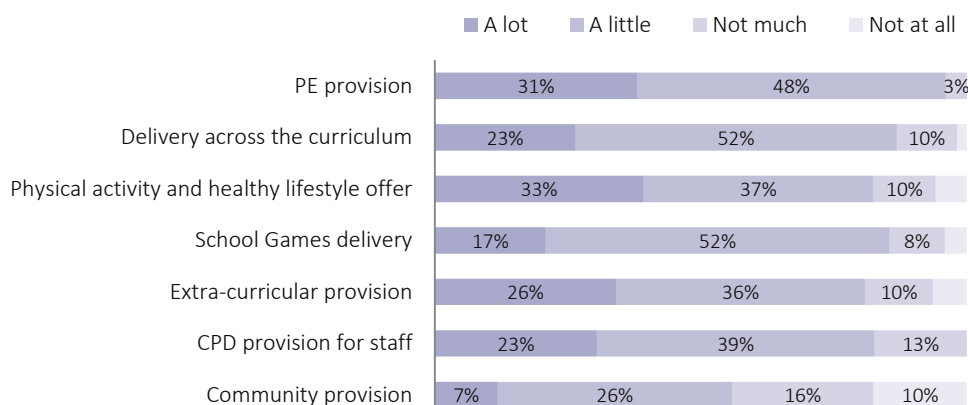


Figure 4. Added value of Extra-Curricular Sport (n=61)

In telephone interviews deliverers of Skills2Play highlight the contribution of the programme to schools' wider health and wellbeing agenda. The impact reported by deliverers is apparently influenced by their objectives for the programme. Schools and School Sport Partnerships that identify members of the workforce to attend training in order to develop and upskill staff, and students attending courses as part of their teacher training, tend to report on the impact on the individual attending training. More experienced staff attending training tend to report on the impact of their training on young participants and these suggest that the programme is impacting positively on children's physical literacy (competence in multi-skills, confidence and motivation, knowledge and understanding). However most interviewees commenting on impact on children highlight that the resource is being integrated in curricular and extra-curricular time with other resources and activities, making it difficult to establish causation of impact.

Coach Mentors highlight that the programme has enhanced their ability to work in partnership with teaching staff, breaking down barriers, upskilling and increasing workforce engagement with delivery of school sport and physical activity.

Mini case studies provide insight into the impact of Extra-Curricular Sport on members of the school workforce, presenting the experiences of a teacher leading a Skills2Play after school club and a rugby coach mentoring in schools across London.

“

For him (apprentice), it's all about experience and upskilling him and making him more confident in using the resources and putting them in practice...He's doing well..he understands what he's doing..his confidence has grown.

School PE Lead (Skills2Play)

“

I did think that it had an effect on those children who aren't able to attend a club outside of school...Children think of sport as tennis, football or rugby, whereas this is keeping them active without it being threatening. Because we play it out on our front field, we are visible from the children on the playground and we often get some children idling over to see what we're doing. We ask them if they want to come and play and they nod their heads, a little bit unsure. Then they get involved. The change from them vaguely shyly coming up and going 'what's going on over there?' to then getting involved and being able to take part in something like that is completely invaluable.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Since taking the course, I've taken a different approach where there is a lot more communication before and after the sessions.

Coach Mentor

Neil's Skills2Play Journey

Neil Radford is a PE coordinator at Godley Community Primary Academy. He is also the inclusion and intervention project lead, runs an after-school racquet club, and teaches PE with all year groups on a weekly basis. He, and other teachers in the school, use the Skills2Play resources during PE lessons to enhance the quality of PE delivery. In the summer term, Skills2Play resources have provided a developmental pathway for year 6 sports ambassadors to take on a leadership role and deliver PE lessons to pupils in the lower school.

"I think it is a fresh approach and a slightly different angle to look at stuff so that's been beneficial for them."

Neil

Following the training day, the clear and accessible nature of the resource cards has enabled Neil to adapt his already established PE lesson plans to incorporate Skills2Play. Although challenging to do so in his busy schedule, this has put him in a better position to fully launch the programme from September. Neil reports that Skills2Play has revitalised his approach to teaching PE; he now has a bank of new ideas and activities to utilize in lessons. Neil enjoys using Skills2Play in order to improve basic and fundamental movement skills vital to physical literacy. He has also received positive feedback from teachers in the lower school, both in terms of his delivery and their ability to deliver Skills2Play themselves:

"I lead one PE lesson for every year group and the second one is done by the class teacher. The resources themselves have gone down like a storm...for the reception, year 1 & 2 teachers, it's been really beneficial. For our upper years (5 & 6), it's been more difficult with the SATs and various other things."

Neil

As the school is currently taking part in the UK athletics scheme, Neil has found the 'athletics' themed Skills2Play cards useful in developing children's associated fundamental movement skills. Skills2Play activities are adaptable to the varying levels of ability and interest of the children and the cards make it easy to keep record of progress on electronic databases. Neil describes how Skills2Play resources 'tie-in nicely' with the school's athletics agenda.

"It's a nice transferable pathway...the thing with athletics is that we're all good at something because it's so adaptable. Skills2Play and athletics tie in really well."

Neil

Neil is able to use the resources to shape the PE curriculum, to prepare pupils for school competitions, plan warm-ups and develop leadership opportunities for young participants:

"You get a great warm-up tool. Not only for myself and staff, but for the year 6s that are taking on ambassador roles as well."

Neil

Neil praises Skills2Play for giving him a fresh perspective on his pedagogical approach to PE. He believes that this will be reflected in pupils' growing confidence and competence and he will continue to recommend the course to other teachers at the school.

SKILLS²PLAY



Jack's Coach Mentoring Journey

Jack Pattinson has been a community rugby coach for the Rugby Football Union (RFU) for over a year and specialises in mentoring those across London who coach rugby in schools, colleges, universities and rugby clubs. The YST mentoring course offered Jack an opportunity to develop his knowledge and skill set to provide high quality sporting experiences for participants and school staff. Jack believes each deliverer requires a bespoke package of support, based on need and identified at the beginning of the mentoring process. However, the process will normally include opportunities for observation, modelling, co-delivery, independent delivery and periods of self-reflection and feedback. Effective communication is essential for the mentoring process to be successful. This approach has been observed to have a positive impact on the confidence and competence of his mentees and their ability to transfer their new skills across the curriculum.

"I had a nice email from a teacher at Westminster Academy a couple of weeks ago just saying how much he's enjoyed being mentored over the past 12 weeks and how much he is now enjoying coaching rugby and how he's taken it into other areas of his teaching. Things like that are quite cool."

Jack

The mentoring programme has developed Jack's ability to communicate and empathise with his mentees which is particularly important in the early stages of the programme. This has enabled Jack to effectively support and develop staff, especially those who are new to sport and may initially struggle with delivery. The mentoring programme has provided Jack with the tools to deliver high quality learning experiences for his mentees, which in turn supports the delivery of fun and sustainable sporting activities in schools.

"There are a lot of politics that we have to manage and deal with off the pitch and having done this mentor course, it has been a huge help in terms of the way you deal with different situations and different people."

Jack

The accessible and flexible nature of the i-Academy platform provides Jack with an opportunity to periodically track his progress and upload resources. The platform can be accessed 'anytime and anywhere', which enables Jack to effectively manage his work, mentoring and training commitments. For those mentors fully committed and engaged with the programme, i-Academy provides an interactive development opportunity. While it is possible to work through all learning tasks in one day, Jack believes mentors should be encouraged to work through tasks resourcefully, while also factoring in time for self-reflection.

"Because you have that level of accessibility and flexibility, meant that I could do it in my own time and it meant that I could properly do it. So yeah I really liked the platform."

Jack

"You've got to be self-motivated and fully engaged in the programme to make it worthwhile. I can see people slipping through the net if they're not engaged."

Jack



Process Evaluation

This section explores the adult workforce perceptions and experiences of the Extra-Curricular Sport training and programme. It considers ways in which the outcomes have been achieved; how delegates are utilising training, methods of delivery and mechanisms for successful, sustainable delivery.

Training

The majority of respondents to the workforce survey attended Skills2Play training (88%). Some respondents (11%) attended both Skills2Play and Coach Mentor training and 11% attended Coach Mentor training only. Had the training not been available to them, a third would not have attended any training and nearly a third would have sought other training with similar outcomes and aims (figure 5), suggesting that the training is meeting a perceived need to upskill the workforce on delivery of high quality physical activity opportunities. Had respondents not had the opportunity to attend Extra-Curricular Sport training, qualitative responses suggest that there would have been ‘poorer delivery of inclusive PE’, an inability to reflect on practice and a need to research and identify other training options.

For teacher training students, the training not only enhanced their knowledge and understanding of fundamental movement skills and holistic development but offered a unique opportunity to put theory into practice, and this was highly valued by delegates.

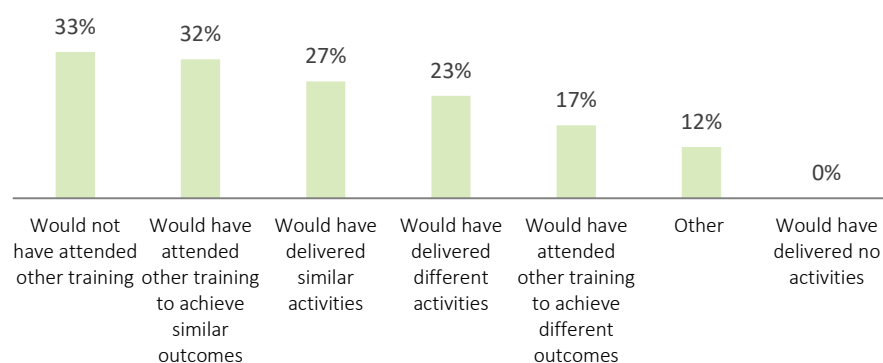


Figure 5. What would have happened without Extra-Curricular Sport? (n=60)

Without exception, deliverers interviewed spoke highly of Extra-Curricular Sport training; they highlight the interactive, fun and practical delivery of training as highly motivational. Themes emerging from interview data are that the training offered delegates a valued

“

It was a great experience where we realised how easily this training can be implemented into our teaching.

Workforce survey respondent

“

It's very important to take fresh ideas into schools with some enthusiasm and invigorate others.

Skills2Play trainer

“

I am more able to be confident in my differentiation after the training sessions which collected ideas from the groups as well as introduced new games.

Workforce survey respondent

“

I was excited to do practical because we don't in any other module. I thought it would be really interesting because we don't really talk about the physical element in any of the others.

Skills2Play delegate

“

I now feel that delivering these sessions is something that I will look forward to doing, not something daunting and worrying.

Workforce survey respondent

opportunity to reflect on current and emerging practice; gain knowledge of their own role in schools and how this fits with other workforce members; improve communication skills; enhance skills in the delivery of inclusive, differentiated activities; gain fresh, imaginative ideas and resources for engaging activities and confidence in delivery.

Implementation and dissemination

Just over half (53%) of respondents to the workforce survey are currently delivering Extra-Curricular Sport, with 87% either currently delivering or planning to do so over the coming year. The main reasons given for not yet implementing the programme are lack of staff time (34%), lack of opportunity (24%) and other clubs and activities taking priority (21%). Qualitative responses suggest that these respondents are planning to begin delivery in the new academic year, when student teachers are in a position to influence activities and other workforce members have the opportunity to plan schedules. Half of the deliverers participating in interviews plan to expand their current delivery in the next academic year, by integrating into other extra-curricular clubs, establishing new clubs, incorporating into curriculum PE and/or disseminating to other members of the school workforce. Where interviewees (particularly Coach Mentors) were either working with or planning to work with other members of the workforce, this time was seen as crucial to effective planning to meet the needs of others.

Of those currently delivering Extra-Curricular Sport, the majority of respondents to the workforce survey are doing so in school lessons. However, this is likely to reflect the large proportion of teachers among respondents. Further analyses suggest that teachers are delivering the Skills2Play aspects of the programme in curriculum time while other members of the workforce (teaching assistants, coaches, apprentices) are widely delivering Skills2Play in extra-curricular sessions. Data suggest that Coach Mentoring takes place mainly in lesson time with teachers.

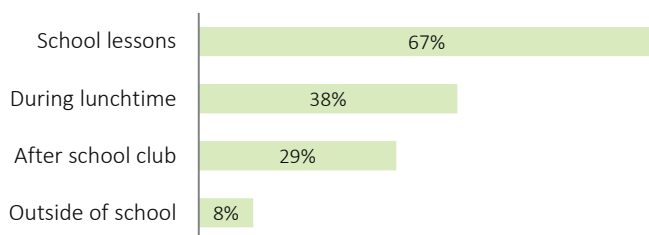


Figure 6. When and where is Extra-Curricular Sport delivery (n=24)

Research participants widely report that they are using Skills2Play as a ‘dip-in’ resource, rather than a distinct programme of activities; all but one survey respondent (who is using resources ‘as a playground tool’) were using Skills2Play in this way. Deliverers at site visit schools are using the resources to deliver specific Skills2Play after-school clubs and the high percentage of survey respondents using as a ‘dip-in’ resource may reflect the high proportion of teachers among respondents. Interview

“

I like that the cards can also be given to children to promote independent learning.

Workforce survey respondent

“

The cards and variety of equipment make it easy to engage children.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

The teachers like to have a plan in front of them, they like a hard resource as opposed to something on a computer. It’s something they can manipulate as well. It’s also been used in some other clubs. It’s accessible for everyone.

Skills2Play deliverer

“

Usually how it works is I will lead to begin with. They (teachers) are given all the lesson plans in advance so they know what’s going to be taking place each week. Then it’s a case of kind of drip feeding them...On reflection I would just go in and coach and focus on the session itself. Then I would almost forget about the teacher, which led to them being disengaged. So I had to find ways to lead the session but still keep the teacher engaged.

Coach Mentor

data suggest that deliverers value the flexibility of the resource, enabling integration with other curricular and extra-curricular activities without the need to follow a sequential programme. While the use of Skills2Play as a 'dip-in' resource rather than a distinct programme is likely to dilute the impact of the programme and make it more difficult to assess impact, this valued flexibility may enhance sustainability by broadening the workforce using the resource.

Members of the school workforce highly value the training, resources and support provided by Youth Sport Trust. Support from schools is also seen as key to successful implementation (figure 6).

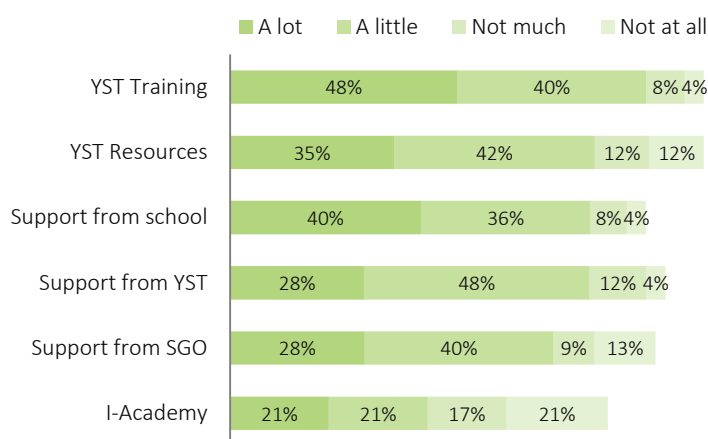


Figure 6. Rating of usefulness in programme delivery (n=26)

The i-Academy resource has received a mixed response. Survey data is supported by interview data, and suggests that deliverers value the ability to work at their own pace, the ability to refer back to the resource as required and the convenience of working remotely to gain the qualification. However, some are utilising the skills and knowledge gained at the training while not engaging with i-Academy and others have experienced some frustration with uploading work (particularly videos) and a lack of feedback from platform providers. Interview respondents praise the assistance provided by their tutor in this regard and highlight the need to be fully committed to the course in order to sustain engagement and achieve the qualification.

Skills2Play survey respondents are delivering sessions with an average of 54 participants and 5 young leaders. All Skills2Play interviewees highly praised the activity cards; they offer deliverers new ideas and approaches, enable differentiation and progression, and facilitate the development of fundamental movement and other transferable skills. These include leadership, teamwork and social skills. Those who attended Skills2Play training report that they are able to disseminate the resources to non-PE specialist members of the school workforce, including the less confident, and to young leaders to assist with and grow delivery.

While the majority of deliverers participating in the research are not targeting Skills2Play activities at specific groups, some report that they

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Simple and effective ideas to use, particularly those not requiring too much equipment.
Workforce survey respondent

“
I was getting a bit frustrated with it (i-Academy). It's totally understood that it was a new system, but if they came back to me occasionally and said 'we have sorted it now, it was our end', it would just be nice to get that feedback.
Coach Mentor

“
Differentiation was covered on the cards making it easy for the teacher.
Skills2Play delegate

“
Having that i-Academy to keep reverting back to, having different tasks that you have to do, having a tutor (mine was brilliant), it meant that I retained a lot of what we discussed and reflected on that quite a lot...So I really liked the platform. Simple to use, easy to navigate, I thought that was good.
Coach Mentor

are using them to encourage less active, less confident, less engaged children, or those who do not participate in other clubs. The activities are seen as a non-threatening, engaging and fun way to facilitate increased enjoyment of and participation in physical activity among these children in particular. Skills2Play deliverers are utilising the programme to enhance their inclusive PE and club offer, through provision of new club opportunities and incorporation of inclusive, easily differentiated activities into curriculum PE. They also report that resources, and in particular Skills2Play activity cards, are accessible and easily used by non-specialist staff in delivery of PE and clubs and that this enables dissemination of the programme across the school and encourages ownership of activities and clubs by young peer leaders, thereby enhancing participants' motivation and engagement. The accessibility of the resource is also seen to enhance sustainability by increasing the workforce able to deliver sessions.

Coach Mentors report that the programme has been instrumental in development of their understanding of the needs of the wider school workforce and of their own role in this context. Interviewees report that the programme has highlighted the perceived barriers to engagement from the wider school workforce; newly cognisant of these and with enhanced communication and listening skills, they are able to develop practice which incorporates teacher involvement incrementally to 'demystify' PE, and encourage, engage and upskill teachers in delivery.

Mini case studies provide insight into the process by which outcomes have been achieved in two schools; one in which two teaching assistants are delivering Skills2Play and one in which a football coach is mentoring other members of the workforce.

“

You can just pick them up (cards) and use them.

Skills2Play delegate

“

It starts where there's no PE lesson taking place. We'll sit down and have a chat for 10 minutes. Sometimes that's quite a challenge in itself because of a primary teacher's schedule. So it's overcoming that barrier to find some time. It can be quite difficult but once you do we have a chat which is an opportunity to build up a rapport and trust and for me to get to know them...some are really lacking in confidence and have a dislike for PE...it's hard for them to be open and honest.

Coach Mentor



Jay's Coach Mentoring Journey

Jay Hamon is a delivery officer at Wycombe Wanderers Trust, and has a background in community coaching and sports development. The mentoring programme provided Jay with an opportunity to improve his communication skills and develop his mentoring practice to support teachers in the delivery of high quality school sport.

"Previously, there was not much communication between me and the teachers. My attitude and mind-set was to 'shut-up and get on with it'. Anything that I was asked to do, I'd just do it, but the teachers were reluctant to get involved in delivery. But the course has helped me understand the barriers some teachers face, and how I might better support them."

Jay

Developing a flexible mentor programme that does not overburden teachers, but provides opportunities to track progress, reflect on their practice, and receive feedback has been challenging. However, integrating regular one-to-one meetings is key to the successful delivery of the 10-week mentoring programme. Following an initial action planning meeting, Jay supports teachers through a process of co-delivery progressing to independent delivery as the teacher feels confident and competent to lead activities. This approach has been well received by the teachers he supports.

"There are a few that are really positive. Some teachers tell me that they really didn't like PE, they didn't want to teach PE. After working with me, they feel more confident. They understand more about themselves and why they didn't like it. I've got some really good feedback which is great."

Jay

While the mentoring programme has been reported to improve the confidence and competence of teachers, the impact on pupils is less clear at this stage, and would require a series of follow up sessions to fully establish the wider impact of the programme. Initial feedback from teachers suggests children are more engaged in activities. The training has positively shaped Jay's mentoring practices, enhanced his communication skills and provided a greater understanding of the distinction between mentoring and coaching.

"I am able to get the teacher to open up a bit more. Because my background and my skills are in coaching, I would tend to demonstrate what to do more and they would observe. Since taking that course, I've taken a different approach where there is a lot more communication before and after the sessions. By getting them to open up to me, I am getting better responses."

Jay

"When I went in to the course, I didn't understand what mentoring actually is. Understanding the difference between coaching and mentoring was really good."

Jay





Ellen and Nicola's Skills2Play Journey

Nicola Benham and Ellen Timmins are teaching assistants at Westfield Junior School. They lead the delivery of Skills2Play activities at lunchtime for children in Years 3 and 4. The school felt that the Skills2Play outcomes aligned to their wider health and wellbeing agenda, while also providing a complementary offer to their Change4Life Sports Club. Westfield uses Skills2Play as a vehicle to increase the level of sport participation by engaging children who are less active or inactive to take part in fun lunchtime activities.

"We spoke to class teachers about who they felt might benefit i.e. who doesn't really get involved in activities outside of school and who's lacking in confidence...We run it at lunchtimes to increase attendance."

Ellen

Following YST's Skills2Play training session, Cambridge School Sports Partnership (SSP) provided a 6 week coach mentor support package designed to develop staff and embed the delivery of Skills2Play. The coach mentor provided opportunities for Nicola and Ellen to observe, co-deliver and eventually independently deliver Skills2Play activities. This was particularly useful as this was the first sports club they had delivered. Nicola and Ellen felt that the coach mentor had markedly increased their confidence and competence, while also widening their repertoire of fun activities and games.

"It was fantastic. We helped the lady run it so we saw exactly how she was running a normal session, warm-ups and the types of activities she did. That then gave us the confidence to do it ourselves."

Ellen

After initially facing problems with attendance, a strategy to target children who were unable to regularly attend after-school activity clubs was implemented. The school believes that adopting a targeted approach designed to engage less active and inactive children is the key to increasing sport participation in schools.

"They enjoy doing the exercise, they all get very worn out which I think they enjoy. They're very enthusiastic about it, I think they have fun which hopefully is changing their perspective a bit on getting outside and doing some activity."

Ellen

The delivery of Skills2Play has had a positive impact on children's levels of confidence, which has increased their enthusiasm and motivation to engage in regular activity. The resources, in particular activity cards, have been instrumental to the success of Skills2Play at Westfield. Assisted by Cambridge SSP, the school has also integrated leadership opportunities into the delivery of Skills2Play, with young leaders from years 5 and 6 supporting activities.

"I did think it had an effect on those children who aren't able to attend a club outside of school for whatever reason like financial or family issues. It gives them the opportunity that otherwise they would completely miss out on."

Nicola

The training and support offered through YST and Cambridge SSP has improved Ellen and Nicola's levels of competence and confidence in delivering activities to a large group of children, providing them with the skills to evolve and adapt activities to increase enjoyment within the club.

"It's given me a little bit more confidence in dealing with groups of children on my own...The confidence in knowing that I can manage is good."

Nicola

- Key Findings -



Impact. Skills2Play and Coach Mentoring programmes have been successful in increasing the motivation, competence and confidence of the school workforce, giving them fresh ideas, opportunities to re-evaluate, improve practice and build relationships, and confidence to deliver and mentor.



Time constraints. Coach Mentors highlight difficulties in gaining time with teachers to plan, monitor and review delivery. However, some report that the training has enhanced their confidence to assert the need for this time in order to provide effective and sustainable practice.



Timing and space. Some deliverers highlight the need to carefully consider the timing of extra-curricular clubs, as well as the space in which they take place. In particular, when targeting children who are less engaged, consider offering clubs during the school day (lunch times) and ensure that the space is appropriate to the time of year/weather, to ensure maximum attendance.



Flexibility. Coach Mentors value the ability to complete the qualification remotely and in their own timeframe; Skills2Play deliverers praise the adaptability of the resource cards, enabling them to fit activities into curricular lessons as required, combine with other extra-curricular clubs, and adapt activities to varying needs and abilities.



Technology. Coach Mentors report some technical issues with the i-Academy platform, in particular uploading videos. They highlight the importance of being fully engaged with and committed to the course in order to complete the qualification.



Increasing participation. Skills2Play deliverers highlight the ability of the programme to enhance provision for those who are less active, less confident or less engaged. Aided by the accessible activity cards, the programme offers valuable, fun, non-threatening activities which enhance enjoyment, encourage activity and provide leadership opportunities for children.

Inclusive practice. Skills2Play deliverers highly value the training and resources for enabling the delivery of inclusive, differentiated activities for all abilities; Coach Mentors have gained knowledge and understanding of their role in the workforce and enhanced skills to include teachers in delivery.

Gauging impact. Deliverers of extra-curricular sport note difficulties in gauging participant impact at this stage: some are planning to implement fully from September 2017; many are combining Skills2Play with other programmes/activities; the short timeframes Coach Mentors work in each school hinders their ability to perceive impact.

- Recommendations -

Consider a training day for Coach Mentors and teachers to encourage workforce engagement. Coach Mentors report that the programme has enhanced their understanding of their role in schools and ability to mentor other members of the workforce. However, they also report difficulties in gaining time with teachers to discuss their needs, plan activities accordingly and review these as skills and confidence develop. Training which includes teachers (and other workforce members) could enhance engagement in the processes key to successful practice.



Offer a support day follow-up with Coach Mentors to track progress and resolve issues. While Coach Mentors value the opportunity i-Academy offers to undertake coursework remotely and in their own time, some have encountered technical difficulties and others, while utilising the training, are not fully engaging with i-Academy. Offering a follow-up day to the training would provide opportunities for further support and encouragement to enhance engagement and share good practice.

Highlight the value of Skills2Play as a distinct programme to enhance physical literacy. Skills2Play is widely being utilised as a 'dip-in' resource. Deliverers value the flexibility of the programme, enabling integration with other activities and delivery by a broad range of workforce members. Research has shown the programme to be effective in enhancing children's physical literacy, wellbeing and personal development*; encourage schools to deliver the full programme of activities over a 12 week timeframe to maximise programme impact.



Allow lead-in time from training to delivery to enable planning stages to be effective, enhance delivery and gauge impact. Coach Mentors have begun to put training into practice by adapting their approaches, building relationships with teachers and increasing their inclusion in delivery. They suggest that they will be able to more fully engage other members of the school workforce from the beginning of the next academic year and see this lead-in time as crucial to effective planning. Skills2Play training delegates similarly state that delivery will either begin or expand in September 2017.

Monitor and evaluate to further develop the evidence base. This research provides insight into programme impact and the processes through which impact has been achieved. However, the budget and timeframe of the research has limited data collection. Encouraging schools to monitor and evaluate activities and practices will enhance their ability to demonstrate impact of Premium funding and develop the evidence base for Extra-Curricular Sport.



*spear (2015, 2016). Evaluation of Skills2Play/Sport. Available at www.canterbury.ac.uk/spear