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CONTEXT

Appendices D and E comprise the case studies of six schools visited by researchers. Visits comprised observations of sessions, including observations of three key outcome indicators of physical literacy (stability, object control and locomotion), an interview with lead deliverer and a focus group with participating children. Three schools delivering Skills2Play (S2P) to Key Stage 1 (KS1) children were visited, each at two time points, weeks 1 and 12 of Skills2Play sessions; case studies form appendix D. Three schools delivering Skills2PlaySport (S2PS) to Key Stage 2 (KS2) children were visited at week 6 and case studies for these schools form appendix E. Case studies for Key Stage 1 schools are longer than those for Key Stage 2 as they form the basis for assessment of Skills2Play impact on Key Stage 1 children and contain information from two visits per school. The case studies for Key Stage 2 children supplement data from the Children's Survey to assess the impact of Skills2PlaySport.

APPENDIX D: SKILLS2PLAY CASE STUDIES

D1) Broadfield Primary School, Manchester - KS1

Reason for taking on S2P

The Skills2Play lead at the school has just recently been appointed to deliver PE sessions and sports clubs for children in nursery through to Year 6. Coming from a sport and development background, it was clear that Ben had clear objectives for Skills2Play:

I want to use Skills2Play to develop their basic skills at a younger age...it is a good start to develop it now so by the time they get to Years 4, 5, and 6 they will have a solid skills base, so we can draw from that and move onto things like tactics...and more sport specific skills.

(Ben, deliverer)

Ben mentioned that the school were looking to “invest in sports and PE” and have been focused on developing Physical Education at the school, with the introduction of new equipment and a variety of new clubs.

Targeting

Ben stated that there was no specific method of targeting children at this point, with the school promoting the club in assembly and sending out letters to parents. Each class in Years 1 and 2 had 30 letters sent out and the first 10 letters returned in each class were signed up to the club. There was a positive response to the club and each class currently has around 10 children attending the club. Ben stated that most of the children attending from the Year 1 have never been a part of a club before.

Week 1

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

Skills2Play runs once a week as an after school club in the sports hall, and at the time of the first visit Ben was delivering the first session. The young leaders played an important role in both setting up the session and running it. The activity card used in the first session was the ‘Multi-Skills Festival’ which the deliverer hoped to use in order to “get a baseline”. In this session the children were split into 6 groups and each group was assigned a young leader to guide them through the stations while taking note of what each child ‘scored’ at each station on an iPad. Just over half of the children at the session had never been in a club before, and these children were mostly from Year 1 classes. A lot of the Year 2 children had been in a club before and seemed to be more familiar with the format of the session. Understandably, the children who demonstrated higher levels of physical competence and confidence within the session were mostly Year 2 children.

Locomotion

The ‘Slalom Run’ provided an opportunity to observe the children’s locomotion skills. Scores were recorded for how many times each child ran through the slalom course in thirty seconds. The majority of the children were not swinging their arms while running, keeping their arms either rigid to their side or hanging loosely in the air. A few of the older children demonstrated a slightly more advanced running motion, however nearly all of the children kept their eyes focused on either their feet, the cones or the floor, with only one or two keeping their heads up and eyes forward. All of the children ran with their body visibly upright, taking multiple steps to change direction rather than shifting body weight.

Stability

At the ‘Static Balance’ station, the children were trying to balance on one leg as the young leaders recorded the length of time each child successfully balanced for. None of the younger children were able to balance for more than 5 to 10 seconds, while a few of the older children could balance for over 20 seconds. The majority of the children appeared to intuitively put their arms out to the side for the balance, however only

a few of the children kept their head forward, as most of the children focused on either their supporting leg or outstretched arms.

Object Control and Stability

At the 'Throw-Clap-Catch' station around 7 of the 20 children at the club were slightly more advanced than their peers, with the ball releasing above their head, then going straight up and coming straight down into their hands. For the rest of the children the ball would often not be caught successfully. The majority of the children would release the ball from around waist height when throwing, causing the ball to finish about a foot away from where they were standing. Of those that did catch the ball there appeared to be no 'give' in their arms when catching the ball to absorb the force of the ball, instead slapping their hands at the ball in an uneven motion. Once again, scores were recorded for how many times each child was able to 'Throw-Clap-Catch' in thirty seconds.

Locomotion and Stability

The widest range of skill level was observed at the 'Speed Bounce' station. A few of the older children demonstrated excellent jumping form, bouncing softly side to side extending their knees and back on the jump and bending their knees upon landing. Some of the younger children really struggled on this station, jumping with rigid arms and legs as one leg would leave the floor while the other was still on the floor, almost stepping over the line. There was a lot of variety between children as some were able to execute the jump successfully but struggled with the landing. The young leaders noted down how many jumps from side to side each child completed in thirty seconds. The difference between the Year 1 and Year 2 children was most noticeable on this station.

Stability, Object Control and Locomotion

The 'Bat and Ball Relay' station focused on a combination of skills. The majority of the children walked extremely slowly and attempted to adjust their body position to keep the ball on the centre of the racket rather than adjust the racket position. The children's scores were recorded for how many times they were able to make it around the cones without dropping the ball, in thirty seconds. Most of the children experienced little success on this task, which proved to be more interesting after watching them complete the balance beam with relative ease. Only around a third of the children demonstrated a natural walking motion while balancing the bean bag on their head, however most of the children successfully walked to the end of the line without the bean bag falling off their head.

General Observations

Ben plans to go through a new activity card each week so that a new skill can be developed. In week 12 the children will complete the 'Multi-Skills Festival' and scores for weeks 1 and 12 compared.

Impact

At the time of the first visit Ben expected the Skills2Play Club to have a significant impact on both the children and the young leaders. Ben believed that the club would have a real impact on the children's physical literacy and understanding of their own movements. For the young leaders, Ben talked about how he thinks it will develop their confidence: *"It is good for them to just take a group by themselves. It's skills for life, you know? They are the boss and they are taking the lead on things and running the activities...it's great for their confidence!"*

At the time of the first visit there had not been any major feedback from the parents, but Ben noted that the club was getting interest from a lot of different people and the parents want their children to get involved.

At the time of the first session the children were very quiet and reluctant to engage in conversation. They all seemed to enjoy the session and there was a lot of smiling and laughing. Many of the children had not done anything like this before and a lot of the children were new to clubs in general, however one child stated that he had *"done the slaloms in football before"*. They seemed fairly unenthusiastic with regards to their enjoyment of playing with both other children and their friends, although a couple of children appeared to enjoy competing and comparing their scores against other children. When asked whether they

learnt anything new in the session all of the children nodded, but when asked to specify there was no response. There was also a mixed response when asked if they think they are good at the activities. On the whole the children were very shy, and did not seem confident enough to answer the questions in full.

Resources

Ben received a full equipment pack, and noted that it would “*add to the equipment*” they already have as it is “*a bit different*”. The school has recently purchased new equipment for the school and the hope is that the equipment can be “*integrated*” in future sessions. Ben praised the activity cards for their links to sport and using creative examples that could help children understand the importance of the skills but mentioned that he would like the activity cards to be accessible on the iPads and using the projector so they can be “*more engaging*”:

Even though I can see the card, I've got 25 kids behind me who can't...so it would be good to have something on the screen that they can see and read... and also see the links to sports and the curriculum.

(Ben, deliverer)

Future

At the time of the first visit Ben was focusing on the current term and getting the club up and running. He stated that the school were committed to the programme. Ben mentioned that he hoped to get a new cohort of children in each term to run it for another 12 weeks; maybe getting the Key Stage 2 children involved, and perhaps even nursery children. It is evident that the young leaders play a crucial role in the continuation of the club, and Ben appears confident that the ongoing training available for new young leaders within the school will enhance the sustainability of the club over time.

Week 12

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

Unlike the first visit, this session was largely game based, focusing on throwing and kicking. From the outset Ben allowed the young leaders to take charge of the group and organise a warm up for the children. It was clear that the session had moved away from a more formal ‘training’ environment, and evolved a ‘fun’ approach over time. The children undoubtedly responded enthusiastically to this approach, with many children appearing more comfortable and excited to get started.

Locomotion

The Warm-up offered an opportunity to observe locomotion skills. Similarly to the first visit, all children kept their eyes focused on their feet; however there was a slight improvement in terms of the fluidity of the running motion, as just under half of the children demonstrated ‘softer’ steps accompanied by arms swinging in a smooth, consistent manner. The rest of the group appeared fairly rigid overall displaying erratic steps, with the body upright.

Object Control and Stability

The children were then asked to kick the ball back and forth with a partner, which proved to be a difficult activity for a large proportion of the group. Only 3 pairs were able to pass and receive the ball in a controlled manner, using the inside of the foot to receive the ball while the remaining children used their toes for both the pass and the reception, resulting in a lot of errant passes and heavy touches. None of the children raised their arms in an attempt to stabilise themselves as they kicked the ball, leading to the majority of children stumbling to one side or the other.

Stability, Object Control and Locomotion

Each child was provided with a football and asked to dribble the ball around the hall, keeping it under control with the inside of their foot. Many of the children appeared unsure how to approach this activity and required further demonstration from Ben and the young leaders. Much like the warm up activity, the children were very upright while moving around the hall, however after a prompt from Ben the majority of children began to crouch over the ball slightly in an attempt to keep the ball under control. On the whole,

only around 4 or 5 of the older children were able to keep tight control over the ball, while the rest of the children struggled to take more than 3 or 4 steps without the ball rolling away from them.

Following the initial activities, Ben introduced an adaptation of the classic 'Space Invaders' game in which a variety of coloured cones (each colour possessing different values) were placed around the hall. Children were grouped into 6 teams, taking turns to kick a ball towards a coloured cone. Over half of the children used the inside of their foot to perform a controlled kick aimed at the target - a noticeable improvement from earlier for many children. Considering that such a small number of children were able to complete a controlled pass in an earlier activity, the number of children using the inside of their foot to make a controlled pass towards a target was notable. Some children still used the top of their toes, causing a lot of balls to fly uncontrollably in the wrong direction.

Ben then altered the game by asking the children to throw, rather than kick the ball at the coloured cones. Ben did not specify what type of throw to use and at first every child adopted an overarm throw. There appeared to be little improvement on form of the overarm throws, with children still not rotating their bodies or executing a follow through motion. As the activity went on 6 or 7 children began to roll the ball at the cones, which was clearly the most effective method. It was notable to see some of the younger children recognise that their technique was not the most effective, attempting to imitate the children who were having more success.

General Observations

Overall there appeared to be very little progression in terms of the children's fundamental movement skills, however there was a visible improvement among some of the younger children who were clearly much more in control of their movements and body as a whole. Upon the first visit there was a large gap between the younger and older children, however this time that gap was not so obvious, as the younger children's skills have begun to catch up with the older children's.

Impact

Ben had hoped that the Skills2Play sessions would have a positive and significant impact on the children's fundamental movement skills. After 12 weeks of running the club Ben has seen the children develop but perhaps not in the way he imagined as he stated: *"In individual cases there has been progression in their fundamental skills but I can't say that it has for the group as a whole; but they have enjoyed it."*

Ben explained that an inconsistent turnout from club members has somewhat halted any noticeable progression from the club as a whole. While the club had a number of regular members, many of those who turned up to the first session have only attended three or four sessions overall. Ben cited parental involvement as a possible factor for children not attending regularly: *"Overall the parents have been great, but there are a few of the kids who I don't think have been encouraged by their parents as much as they should have."*

With the sessions running as an after school club some parents are hesitant for their children to attend due to other commitments and time constraints. Ben was confident that a number of issues surrounding children's regular engagement could be solved by implementing the club within curriculum PE lessons; allowing a greater range of children an opportunity to try the activities.

Although there has been somewhat limited progression from a fundamental movement skills standpoint, one of the most noticeable impacts of the club has been upon a large group of children who had previously not been a member of any clubs:

A lot of them came in very timid and unsure of themselves. Now they are taking up extra clubs, and some have joined the football team. That is one of the biggest things that has come from Skill2Play – that confidence to go forward, put yourself out there and start learning new skills.

(Ben, deliverer)

Ben still believes that, with time, the skills the children learn in these sessions will benefit the children's movement development in the future:

You are giving them the basics like balance, coordination, locomotion and you're moving in different directions and you're even getting the ball skills going. It links in everywhere and that's why I want them to do it, because once you've got a foundation level there where they have all the basics then over time you can progress.

(Ben, deliverer)

Ben is pleased overall with the strides the club has made, and despite some of the issues faced, he believes the clubs success can really be highlighted by some children's individual progression:

There's a kid that was encouraged to join half way because he struggled with his motor skills, and so we use that as a focus for him, what can we do to improve his fundamental skills? I mean he might not have come on leaps and bounds but you can tell from the start where he couldn't catch a ball to now after coming along to about six sessions he can bounce a ball, catch it and move with it.

(Ben, deliverer)

Despite a lack of noticeable progress in terms of fundamental movement skills, both the children and young leaders have clearly come on leaps and bounds in terms of the confidence and attitude towards physical activity. Compared to the first visit, the children appeared very confident and open to discuss their experiences, demonstrating a newfound ability to articulate what they do and how they move, participants stating: *"If they don't know what to do we would help them, we would ask what they are doing and help them"* and *"Sometimes I help people and if they don't know how to do it then I show them... I helped my whole team!"*

Some children provided detailed descriptions of what they learnt from the most recent Skills2Play sessions:

When we did the aiming; I normally just kick it anywhere but I know how to aim now... I learnt that if you use the top of your foot it will go fast, and the inside of your foot it will go slow.

(Participant)

The children offered a reflective perception of their performance that appeared to be non-existent at the time of the first visit. All of the children discussed how physical activity is important so you can *'be healthy'* and *'get stronger'*. Accompanying their increased knowledge surrounding the importance of physical activity, the children displayed a confident new approach to trying new games, as one child explained: *"We play new games every week and they are always fun!"*

Resources

While Ben has found the activity cards to be an important part of the Skills2Play sessions, he suggested that both the sessions and the activity cards could benefit from the infusion of some more competitive 'Challenge' sections within the cards. The Skills2Play club has had fluctuating numbers of weekly members and as such Ben has been trying to look at different angles the club could take to encourage more consistent participation. However he has clearly found the cards to be an important aspect in engaging both the young leaders and the participating children:

They (the cards) are quite easy to read and understand for the sports leaders because it's step by step – allowing them to lead the majority of the session... even when the kids take a look at the cards; they know what they are doing straight away.

(Ben, deliverer)

Future

Considering some of the difficulties faced by being run as an after school club, Ben is hoping to embed Skills2Play within the curriculum, using the activity cards within PE lessons with both the younger and older children. Ben did express some concern about how to go about this, and suggested the provision for a *"start-up formula"* to help with the process of introducing the sessions within curriculum time.

D2) Hernhill Primary School, Hernebay - KS1

Reasons for taking on S2P

Sarah, the SGO and initial lead deliver, explained that the school had an interest in ensuring all of its pupils engaged in physical activity and sport and that the school recognises that all children have a need to be active and fit. Sarah expressed that the school recognised the need to offer more activity clubs for children at Key Stage 1 and Skills2Play was an opportunity the school felt to be most suitable: *“The school is a good school in terms of the provision of PE, sport and other physical activities and keen to broaden their offer to KS1 pupils.”*

Targeting

Sarah stated that there was no particular method of targeting children at this point. However, there was a particular focus on Key Stage 1 children who have less opportunities to ‘get involved’ in clubs and activities in comparison to Key Stage 2 children. In total 24 children participated in the session, half from Year 1 and half Year 2, attending the club on Thursday evenings directly after school. This was the first experience of joining a club or after school activity the Year 1 pupils had been given.

Week 1

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

The S2P session runs once a week for an hour in the sports hall. This was the second session and Sarah had four young leaders and one of the school partnership young leaders (James) to support the delivery of the ‘Multi-Skills Festival’. The week before had seen Sarah attempt to run the session without support from young leaders but found that *“it was really inaccurate and difficult to get the Key Stage 1 children to observe and mark each other”* so young leaders from Year 6 and one from the school sports partnership were now helping with the sessions. They were tasked with ‘scoring’ the children in line with the multi-skill festival recommendations on the Skills2Play activity cards, in order to provide baseline data from participants. Each young leader was fully briefed on each activity and how to score or what to look out for. The young leaders set the activities out while Sarah explained to the pupils what was going to happen in the session.

Through observing the session it was evident that there were variations in the children’s levels of confidence and physical competence. Generally those children in Year 2, who had engaged in activity clubs previously and who had more experience of sport and activity were able to demonstrate a higher level of physical competency.

Locomotion

During the ‘Slalom Run’ the young leaders, with the support of Sarah, recorded the number of times each child ran through the slalom course within a 30 second timeframe. The leaders recorded the scores on their paper score sheets the scores were collated by Sarah at the end of the session. The Year 2 children tended to move more efficiently and effectively through the slalom course in comparison to the Year 1 children. Generally the children were not swinging their arms whilst running and maintained a relatively rigid pose throughout the activity. The children on the whole focused on their feet and the floor, with very few keeping their eyes forward. All children ran in an upright position and took multiple steps in changing direction or to transfer weight from one leg to the other. A few of the older children demonstrated the ability to glide around and transfer weight in a smooth motion between the cones.

Object Control and Stability

The ‘Throw-Catch-Clap’ exercise really differentiated between those children who were more advanced than others. The majority of children threw the ball too high and were unable to clap and then catch. The position of their arms and hands in preparation to catch the ball was relatively wide and in an unfavourable position to catch the ball successfully. The balls trajectory was not linear or vertical in nature but more up and out away from their bodies. The children generally did not move from the spot they were stood in to try and catch the ball that had gone awry. A few missed the point of the exercise and threw the ball high to

get as many claps into the activity before catching the ball. Again the children's scores were recorded. Scores were based upon the number of throw up-clap-catches the children could complete in 30 seconds as outlined by the multi-skill festival activity card recommendations.

The 'Target' station consisted of the children having to throw bean bags into a hoop placed at a set distance on the floor. Most children struggled with the throwing action and some elected to throw under arm. The body positioning of each child was generally very rigid and lacked rotation at the trunk and shoulders. In addition the base or their feet were either too close together or shoulder width apart and there was no weight transfer between the legs as they threw the bean bag (possibly due to the lack of trunk and shoulder rotation and the position of their feet). The maximum score observed within 30 seconds was 6. The Year 2 children did perform slightly better in comparison to the younger children in Year 1. Again the children's scores were recorded. The scores were based upon the number of bean bags the children could throw into a hoop on the floor 2 metres away from their starting position within 30 seconds. This was an adaptation of the multi-skills festival card which suggested that each child has 5 bean bags and 5 opportunities to throw the bean bag into the hoop.

Locomotion and Stability

The 'Speed Bounce' appeared to be one of the most difficult activities for all children. The older Year 2 children were generally more successful than the Year 1 children. Nonetheless, all children struggled to jump effectively and efficiently at speed with a number of children falling over and some not being able to maintain the intensity for the full 30 seconds. Most children did not swing their arms and were relatively rigid and heavy when landing. Those children who were less successful focused their eyes on their feet. Based on the multi-skills festival card suggestion that each child should jump from side to side as many times as possible in 30 seconds, the lead deliverer and the young leaders counted the number of jumps completed in 30 seconds and recorded the information as scores.

Stability, Object Control and Locomotion

During the 'Bat and Ball Relay' the majority of the children walked extremely slowly and attempted to adjust their body position to keep the ball on the centre of the racket rather than adjust the racket position. This was a combination skill that all children found very difficult with most children experiencing little success. The children's scores were recorded for how many times they were able to make it around the cones without dropping the ball in thirty seconds; again this was based upon the multi-skills festival activity card provided within the Skills2Play resource pack. The children were asked to balance and walk across a bench as many times as possible within 30 seconds with a bean bag on their heads. Some children intuitively put their arms out to balance, maintained a stable posture with their head up and eyes forward and did not drop the bean bag from their heads. However, the majority of the children were looking down, unsteady on their feet and not always using their arms to balance. The children's scores were recorded and linked to the number of times the bean bag fell off their heads and the number of times they could balance along the beam for. This activity had been adapted from the multi-skills festival activity cards.

Impact

At the time of the first visit it was clear that Sarah expected the Skills2Play sessions to have an impact on the teachers/deliverers and young leaders that she would mentor, as well as being beneficial for the children. Sarah was confident that the children and the school would see a significant progression of the children's fundamental movement skills and overall enjoyment of physical activity as the Skills2Play sessions continued. The multi-skills festival cards and activities would be revisited at the end of the 12 week programme to establish progress made (individually and collectively) across a range of activities and skills:

I think that the Skills2Play club will have a positive impact on the fundamental movement skills of the children.... Some will naturally progress quicker than others, but the fact that the children will have fun and hopefully enjoy the activities will engage them in physical activity and sport more so.

(Sarah, deliverer)

At the time of the first visit the school had not received any feedback from parents but Sarah had received a lot of interest and support from other teachers who love the resources and would like to use them in the future.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the session, one child commented: *"I like playing with my friends and trying new games"* and another: *"This is the only club I come to; this is my first club!"* Many of the children in Year 1 had not done anything like this before and a lot of the children were new to clubs in general, however a few children in Year 2 stated that they went to football clubs or went swimming. When asked if these activities were different to their PE lessons one of the children said *"yes we don't do this in class."* When asked if the children liked working with friends and learning new things they simply replied a confident *"yes"* and nodded. This was generally a result of the children on the whole being quite shy, and not appearing seem confident enough to answer the questions in full, especially the younger children.

Resources

Sarah received a full equipment pack, and noted that it would be good to have more than a few items. Sarah thought the activity cards were good but prefers the KS2 cards to the KS1 cards and felt the KS1 cards needed more progressions and support for teachers who are less confident. Sarah commented: *"It sometimes feels like the equipment is taken and there isn't always enough to do what you need or want with the number of children you have."*

Future

At the time of the first visit Sarah was focusing on the current term and getting the club up and running but it was evident that the school was committed to the programme. Sarah was mentoring the teachers and leaders to take over delivery and hoped to get a new cohort of children in each term to run it for another 12 weeks. The young leaders played a crucial role in the continuation of the club, and Sarah appears confident that the ongoing training available for new young leaders within the school will enhance the sustainability of the club over time.

Week 12

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

The club has on the whole maintained the same number of Year 1 and 2 children attending the sessions on a weekly basis. The two children who no longer attend the club were asked to leave due to poor behaviour. Following on from 6 weeks of support and mentoring from Sarah, James the school partnership young leader has taken over the delivery of the S2P club sessions. He felt that the biggest improvements had been in Year 1 children but stated that:

In comparison to week 1 the children have come on in leaps and bounds in terms of their confidence and movement skills. Of course some children excel in some areas more than others, but I can confidently say I have observed a marked improvement in all children.

(James, deliverer)

Similarly to week 1 the structure of the session consisted of a warm up, a variation of the multi-skills festival activity cards followed by a cool down. Four of the original activities observed ('Throw-Catch-Clap', 'Bat and Ball Relay', 'Balance Beam' and 'Target') had evolved, increasing the skill level required to complete each station successfully. Two of the activity stations ('Slalom Run', and 'Speed Bounce') had been changed completely to involve a series of more complex movements required to successfully complete the 'Dinosaur eggs' activity station. The changes within the activity stations observed from week 1 to week 12 were necessary to account for the progression and developments observed in all of the children.

Locomotion

The Warm-up was used to energise the children as well as allowing the children to move in different directions, at different speeds and ensuring the children were spatially aware. The children had to walk, jog and run around the hall until the instruction 'stop!' was given. The children were much more confident. This was particularly evident by the energy and effort they put into the warm-up, the group as a whole

were much more vocal and interacted well together, with the young leaders and with James. Whilst jogging and running the children were able to use their arms more effectively in comparison to the week 1 'Slalom Run' activity that was observed. The children were able to hold their heads up and look around them ensuring they were much more spatially aware. Overall the locomotive movements observed during the warm up were more fluid and natural, allowing the children to enjoy the activity more and focus on where to move to next as opposed to how to move. The greatest improvements and developments were observed in the Year 1 children. The 'Slalom Run' activity station was not observed at week 12.

Object Control and Stability

James explained that the 'Throw-Catch-Clap' station had been adapted to cater for the children's progression in this skill:

As the children have improved in terms of executing the skill successfully and becoming more confident we decided to substitute the use of the ball with the colour fabric squares. As the children throw the colour fabric squares in the air the nature of the material means the fabric squares move around in a very different way to a ball, also the amount of effort it takes to throw the colour fabric squares is different to the use of a ball. Ultimately this requires the children to refine their movements and what you can see is how they change and move their eyes, feet, hands and bodies to throw and catch the fabric squares.

(James, deliverer)

In contrast to the observations in week 1 the children were more confident in throwing the coloured fabric squares and whilst watching the squares they were able to move their feet, arms and hands more effectively allowing them to catch the fabric squares. All children from Year 1 and 2 demonstrated the ability to adjust their feet and arms to allow them to successfully catch the fabric squares once they had thrown the fabric into the air. The children were confident in watching the trajectory of the fabric squares, which enabled the children to move their feet, arms and hands accordingly to successfully catch the fabric. Those children who occasionally missed the fabric square were confident enough to try again and were able to adjust their movements accordingly to catch the coloured fabric square. Overall there were marked improvements observed within the 'Throw-Catch-Clap' skill.

The 'Target' Station had again been adapted from week 1 in which children threw beanbags into a hoop to throwing a tennis ball at three cricket stumps. The children had the opportunity to stand on two coloured spots one closer to the cricket stumps than the other and attempt to hit one of the three stumps with their throw. The cricket stumps had provided the children with a much smaller target than the original hula hoop utilised in week 1. All children stood with one foot forward, shoulders slightly turned with the tennis ball in their hand furthest away from the target and the leading arm facing towards the target. The children were all able to rotate their hips, bringing their arm through and releasing the ball in the direction of the target cricket stumps. The more confident children had a more fluid movement and motion in comparison to the less confident children. However all children were able to adjust their positions and were willing to try again if they were not successful. The less confident children initially opted to stand on the coloured spot closest to the cricket stumps. All children experienced a level of success and were prepared to continue to try if they missed the target; some children who initially chose to stand closer to the target took a step back to throw the ball towards the target from the furthest point after experiencing success.

Stability, Object Control and Locomotion

The most significant developments were observed at the 'Bat and Ball Relay' activity station. Previously all children struggled to move from one cone to another balancing a tennis ball on a plastic tennis racket. The week 12 observations demonstrated substantial developments in the children's ability to move quickly and freely between cones whilst adjusting the racket and keeping the ball balanced throughout the activity or for a longer time period/greater distance moved. The children were able to refine their body position and movements accounting for the movements of the tennis ball and preventing the ball from falling off the racket. If the ball did fall from the racket the children were able to try again and adjust their bodies accordingly. On the whole the children kept their eyes looking forward and were even able to progress the skill to either walking, jogging, running and bouncing the ball on the racket or to using a table tennis bat

and ball. The children were much more confident; in particular the Year 1 children were able to exhibit a higher level of skill during this activity than observed at week 1.

The 'Balance Beam' activity had also been adapted from week 1 to allow for the development of children's ability to balance on the move whilst keeping a beanbag on their head. The bench that had been used in week 1 as the balance beam had been turned upside down to use the bottom of the bench, which has a much narrower surface area during week 12. Every child was confident enough to try the activity and both Year 1 and Year 2 were able to successfully balance and walk across the beam. Generally the children were able to keep their heads up and eyes looking forward, most children used their arms to adjust their position to maintain their balance. Some children were able to move much more quickly across the beam than others but all completed the activity and experienced more success in more difficult conditions than week 1.

Impact

James indicated that children had progressed in the sessions, both in terms of improved movement skills and increased confidence:

Sarah, the young leaders and I have really observed massive developments across the board in all Year 1 and 2 children. The developments haven't just been from a physical development perspective but we have seen the children grow in confidence too. You can see the children are all playing together, able to help each other and shouting more so and much more talkative, as you can see a bit too much at times! I would definitely say this is a really good programme and the children have all benefited, in particular I think you can see the Year 1 children have had the best all round development in terms of physical competencies and movement.

(James, deliverer)

The children were much more confident and willing to engage and respond to questions. In addition they were more able to articulate what they enjoyed and why in relation to Skills2play. All of the children wanted to contribute and provide feedback to questions in contrast to week 1 when the Year 1 children in particular were very shy and quiet. When asked about the Skills2Play activities and after school club a number of children commented: *"The club is brilliant, all the different activities we do make it fun and good"; "It is good because there are lots of skills, they are the skills that we might use in sports too"; "I really like the club because I like the sports leaders they are the best"; "I like that I can do things with my friends and work together with others too"; "Running around and warming up is really fun!"*

All of the children believed that they had improved in some way. Comments from participants included: *"I really like trying to throw the basketball into the basketball net and I have got lots better"; "I like it when I can play with my friend as she lives near me too"; "I can jump really high and run really fast now"; "I like everything and like being with my friends and helping them."*

Resources and Future

The club will continue to utilize young leaders from the school to support the delivery of the club as this has been essential in the success of Skills2Play within the school. James had a very positive outlook on the equipment bag:

I really like the bag of equipment and cards. The leaders and I adapt the activities on the cards and as the weather gets better we will use more of the equipment as some of the equipment provided is more suited to outside use really, where we have more space!

(James, deliverer)

D3) Torpoint Nursery & Infant School, Torpoint - KS1

Reason for taking on S2P

The Skills2Play lead at the school is Dani, who is a Year 2 class teacher and also the PE subject lead at the school. Dani talked about how there were a limited number of resources available through the local school sports partnership that were aimed at Key Stage 1 children. With no Key Stage 2 children at the school, the majority of resources on offer were not suitable. After discovering the Skills2Play resources were appropriate for Key Stage 1 children, Dani was very keen to implement the Skills2Play initiative within the school, stating: *"I think Skills2Play will embed a love of learning; definitely for PE because I think the cards are really interesting for the children... it will also help focus the teachers when they are teaching PE sessions."*

Dani appeared to be hopeful that Skills2Play could have an impact on both the children and the deliverer, which was evidently an important reason for introducing Skills2Play to the school. Dani also mentioned that Physical Education has established a *"high profile"* at the school: *"It is good to have the support of the head teacher... because it can be hard with all of the other things they have to do; but the staff really do value PE."*

Targeting

Dani explained that no children would be targeted in particular as Skills2Play will run during curriculum time at the school, however certain children from the class will be targeted in terms of adapting parts of the session for children's individual needs.

Week 1

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

The Skills2Play sessions run during curriculum time, once a week in the school's sports hall. At the time of the first visit Dani was delivering her first session, along with the class teaching assistant. The teaching assistant will play an important role in both setting up and delivering the sessions. Before the session began, Dani talked to the children about Skills2Play and asked them why it was important to be physically active. The children were very confident in their responses with one child stating: *"Exercise makes you feel happy because it releases endorphins."*

The children engaged with Dani as she explained the 'Healthy Me, Creative Me, Physical Me, Social Me, and Thinking Me' sections of the cards, demonstrating a good understanding of physical activity and its outcomes. Following their brief discussion, the children were split into four groups, with one group consisting of children that usually struggle in the PE lessons. The school's first Skills2Play session was based around the 'step it out' card, with the focus on the children's 'locomotive' skills.

Locomotion

The 'Step it Out' session focused largely on 'running' activities and provided an in depth opportunity to observe the children's locomotive skills. Early on it was clear that a group of four children were behind the other children in terms of their locomotive skills, as they were grouped together to allow the teaching assistant to give them some extra attention.

At the beginning of the session, almost every child ran with their eyes focused on either the ground or their feet, resulting in a large number of children bumping into one another during the first activity. The large majority of the children in the class were also running with 'heavy feet'; their steps would cause a loud slapping sound as their feet hit the ground with force. Dani recognised both of these issues very quickly, encouraging the children to keep their eyes focused on the direction they are running, and also highlighted how loud their steps were, prompting some children to move more gracefully.

As the session went on, around 6 children were noticeably running more 'smoothly', although the majority of the children still appeared to be running 'heavy footed'. After the early part of the session where children were bumping into each other regularly, the majority of the children were keeping their eyes

focused forward in the direction they were running, however 4 of the children were still focused on their feet throughout the entire session.

At a later stage of the session children were asked to run in their groups of four to different locations in the hall without breaking the 'train' of children. At first, every group struggled to judge the pace of the other children in their group causing them to either separate or collide. As the activity progressed it was clear that the majority of children began to regulate the pace of their group to stop them from colliding or separating. The same group of 4 continued to struggle with this activity and were unable to keep their 'train' together, however after some prompting from the club lead, other children offered advice to the group that helped them stay together in the final round of the activity.

Around 6 of the children demonstrated a good running motion from the beginning of the session with their arms swinging smoothly, in tandem with their legs. Only 4 children appeared to be moving their arms and legs erratically, with their feet pointing in various directions while running. The rest of the children showed some understanding of the running motion, attempting to swing their arms and legs smoothly, although often ending up in a rigid position with their arms outstretched to maintain balance.

Locomotion and Stability

Although locomotion was the main focus of this session, some aspects of stability could be observed throughout the activities. When the children were asked to change direction the majority of children would 'steady their hands' with arms outstretched to maintain balance. Around 7 children consistently stumbled when changing direction at speed and looked extremely uncomfortable doing so.

Object control

Unfortunately no aspects of object control could be observed during this session as no equipment was used at week 1.

General Observations

There was a strong focus on the cross curriculum aspects of the session, using different continents as stations that children had to navigate their group to. The children were also asked about what situations they could use the skills they learnt in the session and a variety of good examples were provided by the children. There was a clear progression amongst the majority of the children within this session alone, and Dani hopes to use a new card in each session so that a new skill can be developed every week.

Impact

At the time of the first visit it was clear that Dani expected the Skills2Play sessions to have an impact on both the deliverers and the children. Dani was confident that they would see a significant progression of the children's fundamental movement skills and overall enjoyment of physical activity as the Skills2Play sessions continued: *"I think that they will really enjoy the activities and that will encourage them to engage every week... Hopefully we will see those skills (fundamental movement skills) really progress over the 12 weeks."*

Dani had received a lot of interest and support from other teachers who love the resources and would like to use them in the future. Dani emphasised how much she believed the sessions would impact the confidence of the class teachers and teaching assistants, explaining that the clarity and simplicity of the resource cards will allow teaching assistants to deliver confidently:

I think it is something the teaching assistants lack confidence with (delivering PE sessions), but if they can clearly see on the card what they need to do and how they need to do it then it will give them confidence to deliver.

(Dani, deliverer)

During the first visit the children were extremely confident and happy to engage in discussion regarding their own experiences and thoughts. The majority of the children displayed a good understanding of physical activity and its importance before the start of the first session. The children were happy and eager to learn, asking questions throughout the session. When asked what they enjoyed most about the session three different children said that they *"enjoyed the whole session"* and two children agreed that the club

was “*more fun than normal PE*”. Although a few children claimed to have done similar things before, every child said that they learnt something new in the session. Comments received from participants included: “*I learnt to not run all the way, to jog sometimes when you need to go slower*”; “*I learnt to look up when I am running*” and “*I learnt to work as a team.*”

The children were very enthusiastic about what they had learnt and a few children talked about how they helped their friends: “*I helped my train all go at the same speed so we didn't bump into each other*”; “*I told him to look where he is going so he didn't fall over.*”

All the children seemed a bit hesitant when asked if they “*like to try new games*” and quite a few shook their head. When asked “*why?*” The main response was that they “*don't know how to play*” new games. When the children were asked if they thought they were good at the activities some of the children enthusiastically shouted “*Yes!*” A few children then elaborated, with one stating: “*Yes, not at first because I kept bumping into people but at the end I was really good... I am usually good if I've done it before.*”

Finally when asked about whether it is important to exercise, every single child agreed that it was, because it keeps them “*healthy and happy.*”

Resources

Dani stated that she was thrilled with the equipment bag, welcoming the addition of different equipment for the school: “*There are a lot of different resources to the ones we currently have within the school and that again is going to inspire the children, opening their eyes to the wider range things that are available within sport.*”

Dani was also very complimentary of the activity cards, particularly how they provide ideas and suggestions for “*creative cross curricular links*”. The simplicity of the cards and activities was clearly a major reason for Dani choosing to take on the Skills2Play sessions and it is also one of the reasons she believes that the sessions will have such an important impact on the school:

For a lot of staff Physical Education is something they might not feel confident in teaching, because if you're not a PE teacher it can be hard to get your head around sometimes... the cards in particular help teachers to come up with ideas, and the teachers that I have shown the cards to just love them.

(Dani, deliverer)

Future

At the time of the first visit Dani already had a strong vision for how Skills2Play would develop over time within the school. She is hoping that Skills2Play will eventually be used by all class teachers within the curriculum PE lessons. Dani mentioned that there may be some concern with regards to fitting the activities alongside the other aspects of PE already in place, and has considered the possibility of running the sessions as an after school club in the future. Overall, she is confident that there will be no major obstacles in embedding Skills2Play within their curriculum PE.

Week 12

The S2P Sessions (and Observations)

By the time of the second visit it was clear that Dani had established an effective routine for the delivery of the Skills2Play sessions; using a different activity card each week in line with what the children are learning within PE at the time.

The session focused on different ways of jumping, and much like the first session it began with the children discussing the ‘Healthy Me, Creative Me, Physical Me, Social Me, and Thinking Me’ sections of the activity card. The children were very happy to engage with Dani as she explained the activities, while some children claimed that the jumping skills would be useful for netball, volleyball and basketball.

Dani explained that the activity cards have been “*excellent for ideas*”, but she also adapts them to suit the needs of her group.

Locomotion

The focus of the session largely revolved around different jumping techniques; however the warm-up activity provided an opportunity to observe certain aspects of the children's locomotive skills. During the first visit a notable improvement occurred by the end of the session, and these improved skills remained evident twelve weeks later. Every child demonstrated a fairly 'smooth' running motion; even the 4 children who struggled in the last session were clearly swinging their arms in sync with their legs. Early on there were still a lot of 'heavy feet' but Dani pointed this out less than a minute into the warm-up resulting in noticeably 'softer steps' throughout the session. Despite clear improvement overall, around 6 children still kept their eyes focused on their feet leading to a number of collisions during the warm-up activity.

Locomotion and Stability

This session was an excellent opportunity for children to demonstrate their stability in a variety of situations. The session began with children completing a frog jump. The large majority of children made a concerted effort to simultaneously pull their knees close to their chest; however 2 of the children were unable to pull both legs up in sync. This technique was fairly easy for most of the group and even the 4 children who struggled in the previous session were able to complete this jumping motion smoothly.

Moving onto 'Jumping Jacks', only three children landed softly with their knees bending upon impact. Dani quickly used 1 of these children to demonstrate the correct form and following this all the children except 2 were bending their knees on impact to land softly. Four of the children did not use their arms to stabilise their landing and as a result often stumbled forward. After further demonstrations the remaining 4 children began to use their arms in an attempt to stabilise themselves after landing.

The next activity was slightly more difficult, and involved the children completing a tuck jump. At first only half of the children were able to correctly pull their knees to their chest while still landing softly with their knees bending on impact. After a few attempts, all the children except 6 were successfully tucking their knees into their chest and bending their knees upon impact. The remaining 6 struggled to lift their knees simultaneously, with one knee tucking before the other, often resulting in the child landing off balance and stumbling forward.

Four of the more advanced children were then asked to perform the tuck jump off a box onto a mat while the remaining children continued to practice the tuck jump. Eventually all except 1 child were landing softly and tucking both knees simultaneously.

The group was then split into pairs. The pairs were asked to complete every jump they had learnt in a single sequence, with the 2 more advanced pairs doing the same activity off the boxes. Most of the children were trying to help their partner with the jumps by observing their partners and telling them what they needed to do differently. This was largely unprompted, however the club lead gradually encouraged the children to help their pairs and as a result the helping behavior became even more evident. By the end of this activity every child except 1 was completing the jumps with excellent form and landing softly with their knees bending upon impact. The children who struggled earlier in the session began to jump a little bit lower and as a result had much better form on the takeoff and landing.

Finally, the children were asked to use their 'creative me' skills to add a brand new jump/shape to the sequence. Two pairs incorporated a clap into the star jump motion while a group of 3, who were the same children that struggled throughout, successfully completed a synchronised star jump, with 1 child counting them in.

General Observations

The 4 children who had really struggled during the first visit were noticeably more confident and also had caught up with the other children physically. One of the 4 had improved so much that he was no longer grouped with the other 3. The others engaged with each other throughout the session and showed tremendous progression towards the end of the session, with 2 of the 3 being able to successfully complete every jump that they had learnt with the correct form.

At the end of the session all of the pairs were asked to demonstrate their sequences to the rest of the class, while using their 'social me' to give some constructive feedback. All of the groups communicated well to

choreograph their sequences and provided some useful feedback to their peers when asked. Some of the less confident pairs happily provided feedback to their peers.

Impact

At week 1 Dani was confident that Skills2Play would have a significant impact on both the children and the deliverers, and after twelve weeks the programme has so far lived up to expectations. Using a different card every week, Dani noted that the children's fundamental movement skills have progressed in each session:

I think you see improvement in their movement skills in each session, as we work on a new skill each week. They all do kind of link to a final progression, and I think they have progressed over time. They do make progress within that one session but over time there is a definite gradual change in all the skills.

(Dani, deliverer)

In addition, Dani commented on the impact of the programme on children's confidence and communication, teamwork and creative skills:

There definitely has been a big impact in all the different areas, not just the physical side; there have been a number of wider impacts too. It has impacted their creative skills, as well as their speaking and listening skills - because there is a lot of team work and evaluation that they have been doing...I think every child's confidence has grown, their teamwork has benefited and that is going to benefit them in everything they do. Thinking of one child in my class, the skills have really supported him in his general day-to-day activities, he needs extra support with his co-ordination skills and it really has supported him. The STEP part of the card has really enabled me to ensure I am meeting his needs as well as everyone else's.

(Dani, deliverer)

The ability to adapt the session to include children with all different ability levels has been something that Dani considers key to the success of the sessions:

It is able to involve all children and I am able to extend my top children and support my lower children as well. It has definitely had an impact on all the children and I think the sections on the card are really clear on supporting them and differentiating ability levels effectively.

(Dani, deliverer)

The children continued to demonstrate an eagerness to learn throughout the entire session, engaging with both their peers and the club lead. The children were very confident and enthusiastic during the first visit; however by the time of the second visit the children appeared even more comfortable talking about the sessions, communicating much more freely. The children were very keen to demonstrate how they had helped each other during the session. A number of children appeared to be much more comfortable discussing their strengths and weaknesses, some were even happy to talk about how other children had helped them, one stating: *"I kept getting stuck on the star jump but Jay kept on showing me and showing me - he wasn't hitting his knees so I showed him how to do the shape - and I did it at the end."*

All of the children were able to express what new skills they learnt in the session and provided positive responses when asked whether they thought they were good at activities: *"When you jump in gymnastics and trampolining"; "You could use it to get to higher places"; "I think I was good at the tuck jumps"; "I was really good at the frog and bunny jumps"; "I think I was good at all of them."*

At the time of the first visit the children were still quite hesitant to try new games, however twelve weeks later the children were very enthusiastic about trying new games and even appeared very excited at the suggestion of playing new games. Much like the first visit, the children demonstrated a good understanding of why being physically active is important. Comments included: *"It makes you happy and your heart beats fast"; "Because it releases your endorphins"; "Because it makes you happy"; "You should do half an hour or an hour a day to stay healthy."*

Resources

Dani uses the cards throughout every session, within the planning and delivery elements of the session. She has even scanned some cards with the hope of showing children the card on the overhead projector, so they can engage with every aspect of them. She praised their:

Ease of use – especially for the children. The cards are so child friendly; I show them the cards every session and they can talk about their ‘Healthy Me’, ‘Creative Me’, ‘Physical Me’, ‘Social Me’, and ‘Thinking Me’ and they understand how they can develop those aspects in every session.

(Dani, deliverer)

Future

Dani is attempting to embed the programme within the school as she prepares to hold a staff ‘inset’ where all members of staff will get an opportunity to use the cards in a practical setting. The programme will be introduced into foundation and Year 1 next term and much like Dani’s sessions; Skills2Play will be delivered by class teachers during curriculum time.

APPENDIX E: CASE STUDIES (KEY STAGE 2)

E4) Shoreham Village School, Sevenoaks - KS2

Reasons for taking part in S2PS and Targeting

The school's new head teacher, Gillian, was employed at the beginning of the school year after the school was previously placed under special measures. Gillian explained that: *"When I first arrived at the school there were no clubs running at all. We were only able to offer clubs that our teachers were able to deliver; as we only had four teachers our offering was very limited."*

The school gradually set up more clubs, offering children of all ages' football, athletics, and gardening. Gillian had hoped to bring in external coaches with the hope of increasing the opportunity to take part in 'active' clubs but it was not deemed to be a financially viable option at the time. When Gillian first came across Skills2Play she was initially enticed by the fact it was free to sign up: *"I just liked that it was something we could use for free! Free training, free equipment – I thought it was worthwhile giving it a try."*

After attending the training Gillian was very excited about what Skills2PlaySport could bring to the school:

When I got to the training I really liked the whole ethos behind the programme... and when I saw the resource cards I felt that this could be exactly what we need; something that any teacher could deliver, and perhaps even the children. Obviously the equipment will come and go, but the cards are really quite exceptional.

(Gillian, head teacher)

The S2PS Sessions (and Observations)

The Skills2PlaySport sessions are delivered by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) called Lesley. The sessions take place once a week in a small courtyard behind the main playground, for half an hour during lunchtime. While there were only 8 children in the club, their ages and abilities varied. Lesley had adjusted the activities on the activity cards in an effort to make them more applicable to the time and space restrictions.

Object Control

The session started with a short warm-up activity as the children were split into pairs and given a ball to pass and catch between themselves. It was clear early on that there was a mixed level of abilities, with only 1 or 2 children demonstrating a consistent throwing motion. The group as a whole did not demonstrate a 'follow through' motion when releasing the ball and as a result the ball would often end up going too high or too low for their partner to catch.

Following the warm-up activity the children were divided into 2 teams and were asked to take turns rolling a ball at a target 4 metres away. Only 2 of the children naturally went into an effective rolling motion; crouching low to the floor and brushing their knuckles close to the ground as their arm swept through towards the target. The rest of the children remained in an upright position throughout the rolling motion and often released the ball too late resulting in an under arm throw rather than a roll. Lesley noticed some of these issues and encouraged the children to 'get low' on multiple occasions, leading to a slight improvement and the majority of the children hitting the target.

Object Control and Locomotion

For the next activity the children remained in the same groups as they completed a 'beanbag relay' in which the children had to take turns to pick up a beanbag, run to the other end of the courtyard and drop it in a hoop.

The children seemed to really enjoy the 'team' aspect of this activity as they began to show improved engagement with Lesley and with the activity itself. Overall the children demonstrated good running motions, with their arms swinging smoothly along with their steps, despite only travelling a short distance.

Object Control, Stability and Locomotion

The children were then asked to repeat the activity, but this time they were told to balance the beanbag on their heads. Every child was able to successfully balance the beanbag on their head as they walked towards the hoop, keeping their eyes forward and demonstrating a 'normal' walking motion.

The final activity required the children to balance a ball on a tennis racquet while walking from one end of the courtyard to the other. Some of the younger children really struggled to keep the ball on the racquet while they walked, however two of the more confident children helped 'guide' them to the other side of the courtyard, putting their arms around them in an effort to help them balance the ball. By the end of the session all children were successfully balancing the ball on the racquet during a team relay race.

The children appeared to be happy throughout the session, however they all really enjoyed the 'team' aspects of the session and it was during this time that the most noticeable progression in their object control, stability and locomotive movements occurred.

Impact

It was clear that Lesley believed that the club was beneficial for the children taking part; however Lesley felt that there has been limited progression up to this point:

I think they've all enjoyed it, but I'm not sure there has been much improvement yet. They've all got different levels of ability and require a lot of individual attention to even get them to concentrate or do what they are being asked to do. It has been hard to make the club challenging enough for those with, for example, good ball skills while not making it too hard for those with not so good ball skills.

(Lesley, deliverer)

Lesley expressed some concern that the lack of time and space afforded to the club is one of the main reasons for the lack of noticeable improvement:

I literally only have 25 minutes, and that is not enough time to do everything I would like to do with them. They might be starting to understand what to do and go through one progression, but then it's time to go back in the classroom. On top of that, we have such a small area to use that half the activities don't really work in this space, so there are some skills that we won't get a chance to work on.

(Lesley, deliverer)

Gillian commented on the impact of Skills2PlaySport on Lesley herself:

She was very anxious before the club started. She volunteered to do it to help the school but I know she wasn't hugely confident about it because she has never done anything like this before. As the club has gone on her confidence in herself and her ability to deliver has visibly improved.

(Gillian, head teacher)

It was clear that all the children enjoyed the session, appearing energetic and enthusiastic from the outset. None of the children had previously been part of a club and a few children commented on how what they do at the Skills2PlaySport session differs from what they do in PE: "We get to play more games"; "It's more fun!"

Throughout the session one child regularly sought to help the other children when they were struggling with a certain activity or movement, commenting: "I am quite good at it so I like to help my friends... some of the games were harder and so they needed my help."

Some children in the club demonstrated more developed skills than others, but it was clear that these children were eager to support the other children, highlighting the 'team' approach encouraged by Lesley.

A number of children explained that they didn't think they had learnt anything new from the Skills2PlaySport session while two children talked about the rolling activity: "We had to roll the ball at the target and that is kind of like bowling so that will probably help"; "I didn't know that it was better to be near the ground when you roll... I found it quite easy at the end."

Two of the more talkative children in the group confidently spoke about their movement skills when asked whether they thought they were good at the activities: *"I'm always good at the activities, mainly the throwing and catching ones"; "I think I am good, but the games are quite easy."* The rest of the group were rather quiet and when prompted, the general response was that they found the sessions *"really hard"*.

All the children appeared to understand the benefits of physical activity, talking about how activity keeps you *"healthy and strong"* and *"happy"*.

Resources

Gillian was very pleased with the range of resources she received, noting that the activity cards were particularly important: *"I can't stress enough how valuable I think the cards can be. Most of our teachers don't come from 'sporty' backgrounds so the cards will really help them deliver the activities... I particularly like the 'STEPS'."*

The HTLA noted that while the activity cards have been useful, they required some tweaking for the club's particular needs:

I use the resource cards every week and they really help give me some ideas and structure to the sessions, but I find that I need to adjust the activities quite a lot to make them work with the time and space restrictions we have.

(Lesley, deliverer)

The HTLA also mentioned that while there was a wide range of equipment provided, she was reserving judgement on its quality: *"We will have to wait and see if it stands the test of time!"*

Future

Gillian sees the Skills2PlaySport club continuing and expanding at the school, with a focus on getting more children involved, both as participants and deliverers: *"The plan is to train up a number of young leaders to help deliver the sessions, increasing the amount of sessions that we can deliver to the children."*

While the implementation of young leaders will help the school offer more Skills2PlaySport sessions, Gillian commented on the benefit this could have on the young leaders themselves: *"There is huge value in children running clubs for children. I think it will provide them with some useful skills and experiences, hopefully developing their own confidence along the way."*

Gillian also talked about the possibility of using the Skills2PlaySport resources within PE lessons:

I think it is something that could definitely help improve the quality of what we offer in PE, but I think it will also take time. I want the children and the teachers to get used to the ethos of Skills2Play(Sport) before we think too far ahead.

(Gillian, head teacher)

Additional information and observation

Gillian talked about her plans to expand the Skills2PlaySport sessions at the school; however the time and space restrictions have made it difficult for Lesley to run and develop the club as she had hoped. The original ethos and aims of the Skills2PlaySport club at the school appear to have been overshadowed by the needs of the current group of children, and as such the focus has shifted on simply getting the children to be active and working together. The club has provided an opportunity for children to work together, have fun, and be active; Gillian stated that with the provision of young leaders the school hopes to offer *"more of a balanced emphasis on both the 'Skills' and the 'Play' aspects of the club."*

Reasons for taking part in S2PS and Targeting

The school currently offers a range of clubs, including football, athletics, gymnastics, fencing and ultimate frisbee. New clubs are introduced every term and offered to children of all age groups.

Most clubs are delivered by external coaches, including the Skills2PlaySport club, which is run by Paul. Paul was approached by the PE subject lead at the school about going on the Skills2Play/Sport training course and delivering the club as a weekly lunchtime club. Paul explained that:

After I had a look at what the Skills2Play(Sport) club was all about I just thought it would be great for the kids. It is something all the kids can benefit from, giving them those foundational skills that they need.

(Paul, deliverer)

It was clear that for Paul the potential impact on young leaders was one of the main reasons for taking on the Skills2PlaySport club:

It is something that we can hand down to them. The cards are quite easy for them to use, so they can lead most of the session. It gives them that knowledge, and the skills to adjust – ‘how can we make it easier for them to understand?’ Those are the type of the skills that will be really useful later on.

(Paul, deliverer)

The club is open to anyone who wants to come along, but Paul says that they usually get the same ten children, although he stated: *“the Young Leaders go around the playground and try to get any kids who look disengaged to come along and have a go at some of the activities.”*

The S2PS Sessions (and Observations)

The Skills2PlaySport session takes place once a week at lunchtime, in a small area in the middle of the playground. Paul had already explained the activity card to the young leaders, who had planned a session focused around dribbling a ball with a hockey stick. Paul welcomed the group of around 15 children before introducing 4 young leaders.

The young leaders divided the group into 3 groups of 5, before demonstrating how to grip a hockey stick. The children were then asked to dribble a ball with the hockey stick to a cone and back again. Most children held the hockey as the young leaders showed them to, however around 4 children quickly switched to one hand when the ball escaped them slightly. The majority of the children placed their body upright ahead of the ball, dragging the ball behind them. After a couple of minutes the young leaders stopped the activity and explained to the group that it is more effective to place the ball ahead of them; as a result every child adjusted their body position to keep the ball in front of them.

Many of the children were still losing control of the ball, however the next activity required the children to dribble the hockey ball through a slalom course. Most of the children struggled early on with only 2 children successfully dribbling the ball between the cones, the rest of the group were slapping at the ball with their sticks in order to change direction, as opposed to pushing and pulling the ball from side to side. Once again the young leaders picked up on this and encouraged the children to keep the ball close to the stick at all times. Around 5 children continued to struggle, losing the ball and reaching for it with just one hand on the stick, however the rest of the group began to manipulate the ball far more smoothly. This activity eventually became a relay race, leading to more loosely controlled dribbling, however the children were clearly really enjoying this activity so the young leaders allowed them to continue without interruption.

The final activity involved the whole group being asked to manoeuvre the ball within a large circle without bumping into another child. The children appeared to really enjoy this activity and seemed to utilise the correct grip, stance and pushing technique that they had been shown earlier in the session. Around 4

children continued to struggle throughout the session and, despite the efforts from the young leaders, they appeared dejected by the end of the session.

The session finished with the young leaders gathering the children and asking them to discuss what they had learnt from each activity, and reinforcing the techniques they had been shown.

Impact

The format of this club allows 'new' children to join in and 'old' children to leave at any point, and as a result it is difficult to assess an impact over time, however Paul is confident that the club is still impactful:

I think it is hard to say that 'so and so' is 'this' much better at running since the first session to the last session, because that's not how we run it. But I think you can see some kind of improvement from when the kids start the session to the end.

(Paul, deliverer)

Although Paul talked about the impact of the club on the children, it was clear that he believed the biggest impact was upon the young leaders:

You can see they are growing in confidence. At the beginning they were a little tentative and if the kids weren't listening they would not take authority. Now you can see they take control of the situation and will get the kids attention.

(Paul, deliverer)

Paul described the young leaders improved confidence as the "biggest impact" of the club, however he also talked about some other important impacts on the young leaders:

I think at first they maybe didn't know how to think on their feet and react in real time. As the club's gone on, you can see they've taken things like the STEPs, and the Literacy and Numeracy Links, and they know where to use that to deliver the session effectively and help teach the children what they need to know. I think the skills they've got from this will help them with anything they do.

(Paul, deliverer)

The children showed enjoyment throughout the session, but were fairly quiet and unsure when it came to talking about it. The young leaders encouraged the children to express themselves, and helped the younger ones articulate what they were trying to say. One child stated: "the games were the most fun... I liked the race the best" and all agreed.

The young leaders expressed their enjoyment of the sessions:

I really enjoyed teaching them different ways to do the activity. It was really nice to, not control, but lead the session for the younger kids. It was good because they all listened to us and we didn't have to say the same thing over and over or tell them off.

(Young leader)

Most children talked about how they were now able to hold the stick correctly, while some talked about changing direction, one stating: "I found dribbling really easy, but I wasn't able to turn without losing the ball. In the last game I didn't even lose the ball once."

When asked about how good they did at the activities, most of the children thought they did very well. Comments from participants included: "It was easy... I was good"; "I learnt a lot but found it quite easy at the end" and "Yeah I am good at hockey."

Two children were not so confident in their movement skills, yet still remained positive about the session, commenting: "I wasn't very good but it was still really, really fun!" and "I don't think I am very good at hockey but I want to play it again!"

Resources

Paul was impressed with the equipment bag, stating: "It's got everything you could need in there. A lot of specific stuff, but everything in there is exactly what you need for the activities." The activity cards have proved to be an important aspect of the Skills2PlaySport club. Paul talks through the activity card with the

young leaders at the start of the session and then asks the young leaders to use the card to plan a full session: *“It is great because the young leaders can see the drawings of what the activity and movements should look like and they can use that through the whole session to make sure they are helping the children progress.”*

Certain aspects of the activity card have aided the young leaders in the process of planning the session:

They always use the STEPs to progress through the different stages of the session, and I think it’s great because they are thinking on their feet and reacting to how the kids are doing - ‘is this too easy? Maybe we should narrow the alley!’ You can see how much it helps them.

(Paul, deliverer)

Future

The school has not thought too far ahead with regards to developing the club, as Paul explained:

I think we want to just keep it going. It’s working as it is at the moment so hopefully we can get some more kids involved, switch up the young leaders a bit. Hopefully we can have an impact on even more kids.

(Paul, deliverer)

One difficulty the club has faced is that other activities going on around them in the playground can distract the children, and Paul talked about how they could overcome this in the future:

At the moment we just run the session in the middle of the playground and it can be pretty manic at lunchtime. If we had a more private, regular space we could use then I think that would keep the children engaged. I think that is something we will try to look into going forward.

(Paul, deliverer)

Additional information and observation

The Skills2Play club at the school appears to be focused towards developing the young leaders along with the participating children. According to Paul, some of the young leaders came in to the programme quite timid, however at this point in the club the young leaders demonstrated a confident and enthusiastic attitude, delivering a well-organised and beneficial session to a large group of children. Paul hopes to bring in more young leaders next year and continue to run a weekly club at lunchtimes. While the emphasis of this club may differ from other Skills2PlaySport clubs/sessions, in terms of its focus on young leaders, it remains consistent with the overall ethos of the Skills2PlaySport initiative.

Reasons for taking part in S2PS and Targeting

The school currently offers a range of clubs from sports clubs such as football and cricket to activity clubs such as cookery, choir and skills2play. Louise is a Teaching Assistant at the school and has to run a minimum of three extra-curricular activities clubs each term, she currently leads Skills2PlaySport, Change4Life, chess and cookery clubs. Louise stated:

The school is really keen to encourage those less confident children, who wouldn't normally get involved in sport to try new activities and opportunities...that's what we wanted to use Skills2PlaySport for really, to engage those children who are less confident or who don't engage much with extra-curricular activities...also we wanted to make sure we provided those children linked with the pupil premium enough opportunities to get active and involved.

(Louise, deliverer)

Whilst there was space for 20 children, 8 KS2 children (4 girls and 4 boys) took the opportunity to get involved in the club. Louise commented:

The low numbers were in part due to the lack of understanding of Skills2PlaySport...We did provide information and I did go round to all the classes to explain what Skills2PlaySport was about...I just think now the best promotional avenues we have is through our participants who are telling everyone how much they enjoy the club.

(Louise, deliverer)

The S2PS Sessions (and Observations)

The S2PS session runs once a week for an hour in the school hall. Louise is the only deliverer of S2PS and does not currently use young leaders, she commented that: *"Whilst sometimes it would be useful to have young leaders the children themselves often lead activities... initially some of the children hated leading but now they are all enthusiastic."*

This particular session was mainly about locomotion. Throughout the locomotive activities the children were asked questions such as: *"Can you show me how I should walk?"; "How else could I move around the hall?"; "When I run what should I do with my arms and legs?"; "Where should I be looking and what should I do with my head?"; "How can I move from side to side or backwards?"; "Show me how fast/slow you can move?"; "Can I only move using my feet or can I move in other ways?"* The children were able to explain and demonstrate a variety of different movements at different speeds and moving in different directions. Each child was encouraged to use the space available to them, as well as being creative in the way they moved. Each activity (such as follow my leader, musical statues and the shuttle game) required input and feedback from the children and every child had the opportunity to lead an activity at least once.

Questioning and feedback were key elements throughout the session really allowing the children to take ownership of the club. In addition, Louise ensured that the children were able to make their own choices about how they moved using the skills and knowledge they had gained from the Skills2PlaySport sessions so far. Whilst moving to music and playing musical statues the children had to choose how they moved around the hall. When the music stopped the children had to create, using their bodies, a letter of the alphabet as directed by Louise. All of the children were creative and this combined locomotion, stability and balance.

Through observing the session it was evident that there were variations in the levels of confidence and physical competency across the group of children. Generally those children who had previously engaged in other activities were able to demonstrate a higher level of physical competency. However, it was evident that every child had the confidence to try and to persist with every activity until they succeeded. When the children were successful Louise and the other children would cheer. This really demonstrated the emphasis Louise had placed on teamwork and the group responded well to this. The children smiled continuously throughout the session, as did Louise. At the end of the session Louise asked the children for feedback on the activities delivered within the session.

Louise was keen to highlight the value of the children's input in the delivery of the Skills2PlaySport club:

I have really benefited from getting the children's input and perspective from things giving them ownership of the club, so you know which direction to take the club in that works for them. They even stop me in the corridor now and say 'are we going to do this or that next week like we asked?' I am like 'yes, as promised I am sorting it out!' They are proud of their club as a result and they say to their friends 'that's Ms Smith she's my Skills2PlaySport teacher', which is great for me to hear.

(Louise, deliverer)

Locomotion and stability

The children were asked to display different methods, speeds and changes of direction relating to the locomotion. Prior to each skill and activity Louise asked the children to describe, discuss and demonstrate what their body should be doing. All of the children were able to confidently describe how their body (arms, legs, feet, hands, core, head and eyes) should be moving.

Whilst the level of physical competence varied between the children, their confidence and ability to persevere, with the support of Louise and the other children, until they were successful was evident. Consequently, some of the children were really taking their time to think about their movements and naturally this slowed down the execution of the skill; when they tried to speed up the skill they often lost the integrity of the movement and their technique suffered. Others were able to move effectively at any given speed, but some struggled with spatial awareness. Louise was able to challenge these children to think about how they were moving around their friends and in the space provided.

All of the children to some degree utilised their arms to help them balance and with the support of Louise raised their heads and found a spot on the wall to focus on to help them balance. The more experienced children were able to remain relatively stable whilst balancing in a shape of their choice and effectively adjusting their position, using their arms to maintain their position. Other children were constantly adjusting their position, tilting, leaning and moving their arms in a bid to remain balanced in their position of choice. All children were concentrating on the execution of the movement. As the children progressed through the session their movement was more fluid; naturally as they got tired the focus on how they were moving declined. Nevertheless, throughout the session the children continued to listen and engage in all of the movements and activities delivered by Louise.

Object Control and Stability

The catching and throwing game required the children to stay in a static position to throw and catch the ball. Prior to each catching and throwing activity the children were asked to demonstrate and discuss the position in which their legs, arms, hands, heads, eyes and core needed to be in to successfully attempt to catch the ball. As a result all children to some degree were able to throw and catch the ball. Some children were able to move and adjust their bodies more effectively than others to account for poor throws. Other children were not as confident and occasionally closed their eyes but, with support from Louise and the other children, were afforded as many opportunities as they needed to experience success and catch the ball with their eyes open.

Resources

Louise is positive about the resources, she feels that they are informative on whether the activities are locomotion, stability or object control and she runs her sessions based on these. She commented on the cards:

The basic blue cards are the ones I use the most because, like I say, there are a few in the club whose skills are not as developed as some of the others so I find those are, well they are concentrating so hard on moving or catching that sometimes they don't or can't hold lots of other information in their heads such as additional rules or more complex games.

(Louise, deliverer)

Impact

At the time of the first visit it was clear that Louise believed she had observed significant progress in both the confidence levels and physical development and competency within all of the children. Louise believed

the best form of assessing progress was observation and questioning the children. Louise is a confident deliverer (possibly as a result of building upon her role as the Change4Life Leader) and it was clear that Skills2PlaySport has had and would continue to have a positive impact on the children involved. Louise feels that the club has already had a positive impact on the group as a whole and for 2 of her pupils in particular who before did not like attending the club but now they thoroughly enjoy it. Louise also does a dinnertime duty and has noticed that those children who are involved in the sessions are now much more confident in the playground and engage in the activities available. Louise comments on the impact the sessions have had on the children:

For all of the children I expect, and have seen already, an improvement in the good basic movement skills that are really going to help them in the sporting and activity arena. These skills would be applicable to any sport in which they may want to try you know! Some of them are not fantastic but they are now confident enough to give it their all and try and keep trying which is really nice to see.

(Louise, deliverer)

The children showed enjoyment of the session and smiled throughout. They were constantly engaged, ready and able to listen and learn during every aspect of the session. It was possible to talk to all 8 of the children about their Skills2PlaySport participation. The children were initially asked *“Do you enjoy your club, what are the best bits?”* The children simultaneously shouted *“YES we enjoy it.”* One boy went on to say *“I love stuck in the mud”* and another *“throwing and catching are the best.”* One of the girls put her hand up and said *“hmmm I enjoy moving and striding around, that’s fun”* and one boy added *“moving around and passing I like.”*

The children were then asked *“Is this club similar to PE or to other clubs you might go to?”* One child said *“well it is kind of the same but different... with PE you go in the hall and outside to things that get you fitter. In this club well you get fitter but we just do fun things and games”* and another stated *“we get to try new stuff and games and it’s fun!”*

The children were then asked *“Do you enjoy playing with your friends in the club and helping each other?”* Again the group were united in their response of *“Yes!”* and one boy then said *“we help each other and it is fun to show each other what to do too, like doing the stretches and everyone copying.”*

The children had felt they had developed somewhat from the beginning of the club when asked. One boy said *‘my throwing and catching has got loads better’*. All of the children agreed with this.

Future

The club will continue to run and, Louise hopes, expand in numbers attending the extra-curricular club, as well as into curriculum sessions:

I will be working with my PE Coordinator, who has been so supportive, in mapping across the cards into PE sessions across the school to use as a curriculum resource as well as in an extracurricular club developing the children physically and their physical competencies.

(Louise, deliverer)

Additional information and observation

At the end of the session the head teacher came to the door and asked the children *“so what have you all been doing, has it been multi-skills?”* The children nodded and the teacher then went on to ask *“did you enjoy the session, was it fun?”* One of the children answered *“it was very good but I am tired now!”*

The children were a really cohesive group helping each other for example four of the children (3 boys and 1 girl) all waited together to take their PE bag back to their pegs outside of their classroom. They all returned promptly as a group. Louise had really instilled a sense of working as a team with the children and noted that: *“The children are really good together, there is never any reference to gender or differences in other things either they are just one group. So no she’s a girl she can’t do this or that, which is great!”*

Referring to SPEAR’s Children’s Survey, unprompted, one boy commented *“I really enjoyed doing the writing at the very beginning they were fun”* and another *“They were fun!”*