

# spear

centre for sport, physical education  
& activity research

## Project Ability Evaluation Final Report



April 2017

## About *spear*

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

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

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

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Project Ability evaluation undertaken by *spear* and commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust. Report produced by *spear*.

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## Context

### About the programme

Project Ability is funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST). Initiated in 2011, Project Ability involves a range of blended initiatives including continuing professional development (CPD) in inclusive practice for the school sport workforce and leadership training and events for young people. The programme is designed to improve and extend provision of high quality PE, sport, leadership and advocacy opportunities for young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND).

YST works with a national network of Inclusion Lead Schools to support delivery of Project Ability. The Inclusion Lead Schools provide expert advice, training and guidance to the school sport workforce to promote and support inclusive practice in and through PE and school sport.

### About the evaluation

*spear* has been commissioned from September 2016 to April 2017 to conduct an independent evaluation of Project Ability. The evaluation is designed to capture evidence of outcomes achieved and draw out key lessons learnt.

This Final Report focuses on the impact of Project Ability on young participants, teachers<sup>1</sup> and schools and how this impact has been achieved. Data informing this report are drawn from the survey returns of 598 Project Ability young participants, 506 Step into Sport young leaders and 58 teachers; 3 interviews with Inclusion Leads; 55 graffiti wall and 13 diary corner contributions; 2 site visits to Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events and 1 site visit to an Inclusion Lead School; and YST monitoring returns from 48 Inclusion Lead Schools.

The report is divided into three substantive sections: Reception & Engagement; Impact & Insight; and Activities, Achievements & Challenges. Key Messages for Successful Inclusive Practice are also presented, providing recommendations for implementing, embedding and sustaining inclusive practice and the programme as a whole.

Table 1 summarises the evaluation approach for Project Ability.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'teachers' is used to represent the school sport workforce and may include teachers, Inclusion Leads and SGOs.

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### Key programme aims

1. *Increase opportunities for young people with SEND to participate and progress in and through PE and school sport.*
2. *Increase the skills and confidence of the school sport workforce to review their practice and provide high quality provision, including strengthening school to community participation pathways.*
3. *Raise the aspirations of young people with SEND and those that support them at home and in their community to realise their potential in and through PE and sport.*
4. *Embrace the voice of young people with SEND to drive change in their schools and communities.*

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### Key research questions

1. *Has Project Ability increased participation in PE and school sport?*
2. *Has Project Ability supported young people with SEND to become advocates and leaders in and through PE and school sport?*
3. *What is the impact of training, advice and guidance on the workforce delivering Project Ability?*
4. *What are the key criteria for successful implementation of Project Ability to raise participation and aspirations of young people with SEND?*

Table 1. Programme evaluation

	Research	Sample (& MME <sup>a</sup> )
<b>Relationship Management</b>	Sustained relationship management with schools to facilitate evaluation participation	38 of 47 Inclusion Lead School contacts recruited to <i>spear</i> research panel
<b>Young People Survey<sup>b</sup></b>	<p>Cross sectional survey of all young participants (leaders and young people taking part in activities delivered by young leaders) completed at weeks 1 and 6 of engagement with the programme in 2016/17</p> <p>Data analysed to assess impact on activity, attitudes, leadership, aspirations and advocacy</p>	<p>All survey returns: 634 survey returns from 598 young participants in 68 schools (wk 1 n=317, wk 6 n=317, MME+/-5%)</p> <p>Survey returns from young participants with SEND: 448 survey returns from 412 young participants with SEND in 53 schools (wk 1 n=185, wk 6 n=263, MME+/-~6%)</p>
<b>Step into Sport Young Leader Survey<sup>b</sup></b>	Post training event survey of young leaders to capture perceptions, experiences and impact	<p>All survey returns: Survey returns from 506 young leaders in 77 schools (MME+/-4%)</p> <p>Survey returns from young leaders with SEND: Survey returns from 271 young leaders with SEND in 56 schools (MME+/-5%)</p>
<b>School Sport Workforce Survey</b>	Online survey of teachers to explore experiences and perceptions of impact administered March 2017	Completions from 58 teachers (MME+/-13%); 53 from Inclusion Lead Schools and 5 from other participating schools
<b>Inclusion Lead Interviews</b>	Telephone interviews with Inclusion Leads to complement site visits and inform case studies	Telephone interviews with 3 Inclusion Leads
<b>Multimedia Case Studies</b>	Site visits to 2 Step into Sport events and 1 Inclusion Lead School to create interactive case studies capturing delivery, experiences and impact	<p>Site visits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- London Step into Sport event</li> <li>- South Yorkshire Step into Sport event</li> <li>- Chadsgrove School and Specialist Sports College</li> </ul>
<b>Graffiti Wall<sup>c</sup></b>	Graffiti wall at Step into Sport event to engage and gather insights into barriers and motivations around sport participation	55 contributions to the graffiti wall from young leaders attending London Step into Sport event
<b>Diary Corner<sup>c</sup></b>	Diary corner at Step into Sport event to explore perceptions of activity, leadership, barriers, motivations and aspirations	13 participants in the diary corner at South Yorkshire Step into Sport event
<b>Secondary Analysis</b>	Analysis of YST monitoring data to generate participation figures and upscale primary impact data	Monitoring returns from 47 of 53 and 48 of 52 Inclusion Lead Schools submitted to YST December 2016 and March 2017 (MME~+/-4%)

<sup>a</sup> MME = Maximum Margin of Error (see methodological note at appendix A for further details).

<sup>b</sup> Young People and Step into Sport Young Leader surveys shown at appendix B; a breakdown of responses at appendix C.

<sup>c</sup> Graffiti wall and diary corner shown at appendix D.

## Reception & Engagement

Project Ability involves a range of initiatives designed to increase provision of inclusive opportunities for young people with SEND. Project Ability initiatives are driven by YST Inclusion Lead Schools and supported by Enablers, Advisors and Advocates working with mainstream and SEN schools, School Games Organisers (SGOs) and partner organisations (e.g. EFDS, NGBs and CSPs). The initiatives include bespoke projects, the TOP Sportsability resource, Improving Inclusive Practice CPD and advice and guidance to support provision of inclusive PE, school sport and the School Games. They also include Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events to enable young people with and without SEND to become confident and competent participants, leaders and advocates.

Key targets for Project Ability between September 2016 and March 2017 were to train 1,600 teachers and AOTTs in inclusive practice, 60 young role models and 60 young mentors with SEND, and 1,200 young people (50% with SEND) through Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events. Programme output data<sup>2</sup> presented in table 2 show these targets have been exceeded.

In 2016/17, Project Ability and the Inclusion Lead Schools have trained

**4,685**

members of the school sport workforce in inclusive practice, and

**2,164**

young leaders through Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events, of whom

**1,278**

have SEND, to provide sporting opportunities to

**5,882**

young people

Table 2. Project Ability programme outputs

<i>Between September 2016 and March 2017, Project Ability and the Inclusion Lead Schools have:</i>	
trained	<b>4,685</b> members of the school sport workforce
... through delivery of	<b>382</b> Improving Inclusive Practice CPD events/sessions.
The programme has hosted	<b>33</b> Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events
... with	<b>171</b> young role models with SEND supporting delivery
... to	<b>2,164</b> young leaders
... of whom	<b>1,320</b> (61%) are boys, <b>844</b> (39%) are girls
	<b>267</b> (12%) are from a BAME group
	<b>1,278</b> (59%) have SEND,
... and	<b>1,237</b> (57%) are undertaking leadership roles in the School Games.
Young Leaders trained through Step into Sport have provided sporting opportunities to	<b>5,882</b> young people
... of whom	<b>4,129</b> (70%) have SEND.

<sup>2</sup> Output data derived from monitoring returns completed by 47 of 53 Inclusion Lead Schools surveyed in Dec 2016 and 48 of 52 Inclusion Lead Schools surveyed in Mar 2017 (MME +/- 4%).

Data from *spear's* School Sport Workforce Survey suggest that around a quarter of participating schools have engaged with Project Ability since its inception in 2011. Around half joined the programme between 2012 and 2015, and around a quarter are new to Project Ability this year. Over three quarters of schools have chosen to embed the programme as part of their PE and cross curricular provision. Around half run Project Ability activities at lunchtime and over two thirds deliver the activities before or after school.

Around half of participating schools have targeted Project Ability. Among these schools, the key targeting characteristic is SEND. Schools have also targeted the programme at young leaders, less active and less confident students, and those with behavioural or attendance issues. Data from the Young People Survey suggest that just under two thirds of young participants are new to the programme this year and around a fifth have attended Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events.

Increasing inclusive sport provision and empowering young people with SEND through PE and school sport are the main reasons given by schools for engaging in Project Ability. The programme is seen to enable access to a wider range of sporting and leadership opportunities than might otherwise be available, and these opportunities, in turn, are seen to support the development of valuable, transferable skills.

Teachers explain that the chance for students with SEND to try new things and work with other young people is key to developing their confidence, aspirations and independence. The programme is also seen as a means to raise awareness and understanding, enhance engagement in activity and leadership and provide a pathway for aspiring young leaders.

The chance for teachers, particularly those in mainstream settings, to find out more about sporting and leadership activities available for their students with SEND is a further reason cited by schools for engaging in Project Ability. The CPD is reported to enable teachers to effectively support young people to access these opportunities, and to increase the quality and scope of their own inclusion offer.

For the Inclusion Leads, Project Ability is seen as a means to promote inclusive practice, and as a catalyst for wider social inclusion:

*I feel it is vital that all young people should have the opportunity to be involved in PE and sport. Being able to support and train teachers on inclusion is really important as well as creating young leaders who will shape PE and sport and act as catalysts for change to ensure that opportunities are for all.*

Inclusion Lead, School Sport Workforce Survey

---

“

*We have been involved with Project Ability from the outset and it is at the heart of what we do: Inclusive competition, Inclusive leadership. One ex pupil said that 'everyone at the school is a sports leader'.*

Inclusion Lead, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*I believe all young people have the right to as many sporting opportunities as we can give them including leadership and coaching opportunities.*

Inclusion Lead, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*We got involved with project Ability this year to encourage more of our young people with SEND to develop physical and holistic skills which will support them to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.*

Teacher, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*The opportunities that are available through Project Ability are invaluable for the children and give them the opportunity to develop leadership skills and compete and lead outside of school.*

Teacher, School Sport Workforce Survey



## Impact & Insight

This section presents impact data from *spear's* Project Ability Young People, Step into Sport Young Leader and School Sport Workforce Surveys, alongside qualitative insights from interviews with teachers, focus groups with participants, contributions to the graffiti wall and diary corner and site visits to two Step into Sport events and one school.

### Young people

#### Opportunities & awareness

'Reception & Engagement' shows that across 2016/17, Project Ability has trained almost 4,700 members of the school sport workforce and just under 2,200 young leaders to provide sporting opportunities to around 5,900 young people. These opportunities have been embraced by schools, with increased awareness of the importance *and* achievability of inclusive provision and practice expressed by teachers and young people alike. Respondents to the School Sport Workforce Survey note that Project Ability helps shape their understanding of the impact of PE and sport to "change young people's lives" while simultaneously making inclusion 'easier' for schools. Others note that the programme encourages networking between mainstream and SEN schools, 'opening the eyes' of staff to the needs of young people and raising awareness of the potential for inclusive practice to enrich the learning environment.

For Project Ability young participants, the programme is seen to support meaningful engagement in activity and leadership. Through that engagement, young people with and without SEND are reported to have a better understanding of 'difference', the need to celebrate difference and be respectful of that difference. They have a greater awareness of the opportunities other young people may need and given the chance to engage, take responsibility, make mistakes and develop resilience, are seen to be realising the role they can play in enabling these opportunities.

*At Step into Sport there were kids from SEN and mainstream schools working together... It was lovely to see how they flourished in confidence. Both sides do lack confidence in different ways. The children from SEN schools lack confidence in being independent, they think they always need support but with the right guidance, they can do it independently. Those from mainstream schools come across a bit nervous about saying something wrong or hurting somebody. At the end of the day, they just treated them as their peers.*

Teacher, site visit school

“

*We don't have a lot of opportunities in mainstream schools that are specifically aimed at young people with SEND. By working with Project Ability we are now able to offer more than we have done before.*

Teacher, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*Project Ability has been the driver for greater networking with mainstream and special schools, helping us to raise the profile of inclusive sport.*

Inclusion Lead, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*They've seen that PE isn't just about being physically active there are other sides to it - they can be a leader or an official and help their peers in a different way. I think that they're really enjoying that side of it and embracing it.*

Teacher, site visit school

“

*It's more than just standing up and speaking, you've got to engage with people, look after everyone, be part of it as well as lead it.*

Young Role Model, Step into Sport event

“

*I have a 6 year old sister with autism, ADHD and PDA. Before I started Project Ability, I thought she was the only child with it but now I have learnt there is more children just like her.*

Young Role Model, Step into Sport event



## Activity & attitudes

Project Ability aims to increase opportunities for young people with SEND to participate and progress in and through PE and school sport. Responses to the Young People Survey suggest these opportunities have been welcomed by programme participants. Since taking part in Project Ability, two thirds of young participants say they ‘love’ playing sport and around three quarters say they play more sports and games (75%) and *want* to play more sports and games (73%) than before.

While the percentage of participants reporting to meet CMO guidelines for physical activity has not changed (~28%), the percentage of participants who think they are good at sports ‘every day’ has increased significantly (figure 1). This increase reflects the 28% rise in the perceptions of young female participants, only a third of whom thought they were good at sports ‘every day’ on joining the programme compared to around half of boys. Engagement in Project Ability has helped close this gap, with over half of boys *and* girls believing they are good at sports ‘every day’ by week 6 of the programme.

After taking part in Step into Sport, over three quarters of young leaders think being active is important (82%) and just under three quarters think taking part in fun activities is important (73%) ‘a lot’. These positive perceptions are reiterated by teachers who believe the programme has encouraged participants to be more active (73%), more positive about being active (90%) and more inclined to take part in the School Games (73%).

Data from the graffiti wall and diary corner presented on the following page show that key barriers to activity relate to young people’s perceptions of sport as gendered, overly competitive and tiring, while key motivators and enablers are identified as opportunities, friends and fun. When asked why their friends might not want to do sport, young leaders in the diary corner explained that they didn’t want to be judged or left out because they were ‘a bit different’, but that fun, friendly and inclusive activities might encourage them to take part. These perceptions are reflected in responses to the Young People Survey, where feeling happy, having fun and being with friends rate top among aspects of Project Ability enjoyed by participants.

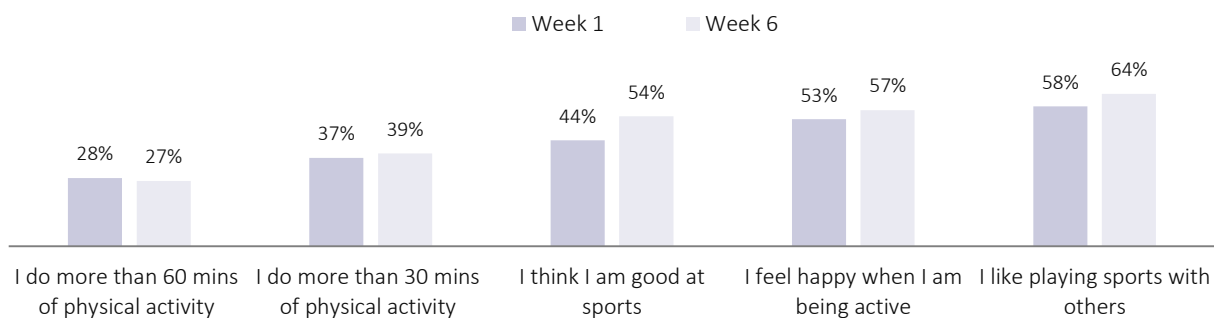


Figure 1. Activity and attitudes ‘every day’ (Young People Survey, n=317)

Since taking part in Project Ability

~6,000

young participants (75%) say they play more sports and games than before

~5,900

young participants (73%) say they want to play more sports and games than before

Q

Why do you think some of your friends don’t do sport?

“

*Sometimes it is too competitive and that can put people off especially if they aren't that confident, they can feel like they're being looked at and judged. Sometimes there aren't enough opportunities for people to get involved in the way they want and that are right for them.*

Young Leader, Step into Sport event

Q

What would encourage your friends to do more sport?

“

*Put on activities that are more relaxed and fun, maybe with a little bit of competition but not too much, make sure everyone is welcome and that they are heard and feel involved.*

Young Leader, Step into Sport event

# Motivations for taking part in sport



**Friends** give me the courage to participate

I feel motivated when I see **improvements**



Make sports **fun** for everyone

**Opportunities** to try new sports



**Training** with good coaches

I want to be **challenged**



Keeping **fit**

Participating with **friends**



It's too **tiring**

I don't have **time** to play sports



**Stereotypes** created by sports

Sports are **male dominated**



People **judging** you on your ability

Some people don't play **fairly**



I don't have the **confidence** to try different sports

There has to be a winner and a loser in **competition**



# Barriers to taking part in sport

## Leadership, aspirations & advocacy

The activity and leadership opportunities provided through Project Ability aim to raise aspirations and embrace the voice of young people with SEND. Survey data presented in figure 2 suggest these aims have been achieved; the percentage of participants who say they feel confident, share their ideas and can achieve anything they want to has increased significantly over six weeks of engagement. The programme has also impacted positively on participant's availability to learn, with significant increases in the percentage of participants who like listening to others and learning at school 'a lot'. The magnitude of change is greatest among young female participants, who reported less positive perceptions of their skills and attributes than boys at the start of the programme, but comparable perceptions by week six.

Young participant's perceptions of impact on their social, emotional and individual development are supported by teachers, with over three quarters reporting positive impacts on participant's social skills (87%) and aspirations (80%). Just under two thirds believe the programme has increased resilience (63%) and a sense of belonging (63%) and over half say it has improved attitudes to school (57%) 'a lot'.

The development of holistic skills and attributes is reported by teachers to underpin participant's successful engagement in the leadership and advocacy opportunities provided through Project Ability. Data from the diary corner indicate that low confidence, fear of being judged and a lack of accessible role models are seen by young people as barriers to leadership, while opportunities to build confidence and be inspired by 'people like me' are seen as enablers.

Responses to the Young Leader Survey suggest that Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events help overcome perceived barriers by fostering key skills and confidence. After taking part in Step into Sport, around three quarters of young leaders say they feel confident to take on new challenges (71%) and learn new things (75%) 'a lot'. They also believe they can make activities fun (74%), change activities so everyone can take part (72%) and make others feel welcome (77%).

Since taking part in Project Ability, around half of participants say they lead more sports than before (53%) and are better, more confident leaders (~51%). Over three quarters of teachers (77%) believe the programme has helped participants to become confident and competent leaders and provided a platform for them to support the School Games and events.

Since taking part in Project Ability

~4,300

young participants (53%) say they lead more sports and games than before

After taking part in Step into Sport

~1,100

young leaders (51%) say they are a better leader

~1,100

young leaders (50%) say they are a more confident leader

Q

What might stop some of your friends becoming leaders?

“

*Confidence and feeling like they are being judged, trying to break through the stigma when there aren't people you can relate to.*

Young Leader, Step into Sport event

Q

If a friend was thinking about becoming a leader, what would you say to them?

“

*I feel like I have a voice which is actually heard now.*

Young Leader, Step into Sport event

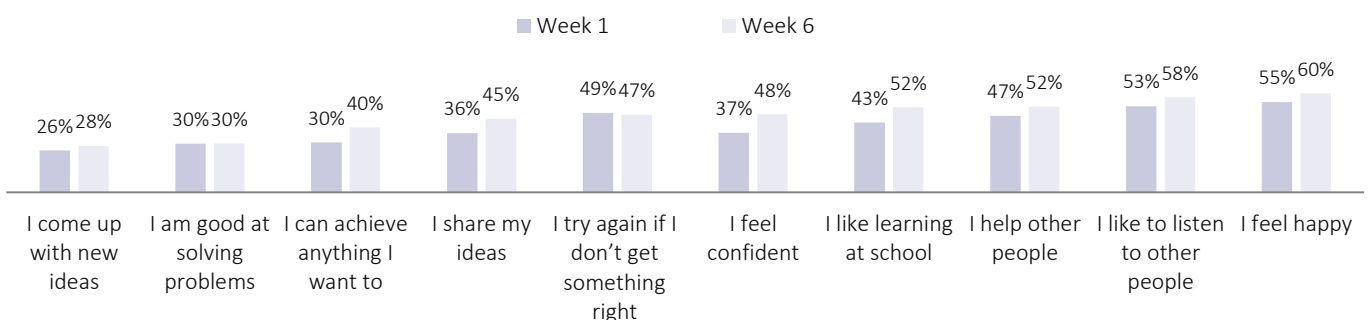


Figure 2. Wider skills and attributes 'a lot' (Young People Survey, n=317)

## Teachers, schools & communities

Data from the School Sport Workforce Survey presented in figure 3 suggest that the CPD opportunities provided through Project Ability have impacted positively on teacher's confidence, competence and motivation to deliver inclusive PE and school sport. While the sample is small, the impact appears greatest on teachers from mainstream schools (n=30). As one Inclusion Lead explained, the main aim of delivering CPD is to give staff in mainstream settings the skills and knowledge to work competently and confidently with their students with SEND.

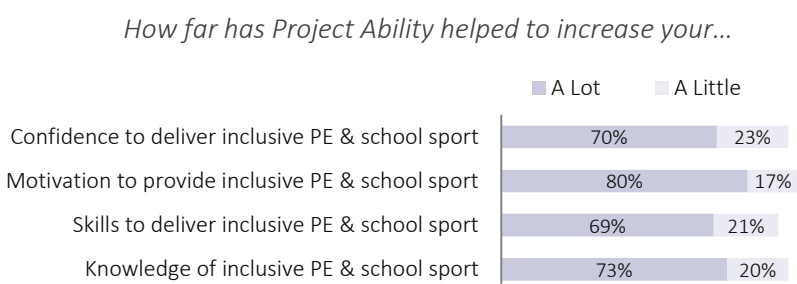


Figure 3. Impact on teachers (School Sport Workforce Survey, n=58)

Qualitative responses to the School Sport Workforce Survey suggest the programme has raised awareness of the role of Inclusion Lead Schools and the support they can provide. This support, in turn, is seen to have impacted positively on the numbers of schools delivering inclusive sports events and attending inclusive competitions.

Project Ability is widely perceived by teachers to support whole school agenda and enhance provision across the school (figure 4). Over half of surveyed teachers from SEN schools believe the programme has strengthened school to community links (16 of 28) compared to a sixth of mainstream teachers (5 of 30). Inclusion Leads in particular attest to the role of Project Ability in initiating and refreshing links with local schools. These links are used to offer CPD to staff and provide leadership taster sessions for young people with SEND in mainstream settings. They are also used to promote community clubs and encourage participation in the School Games, festivals and events.

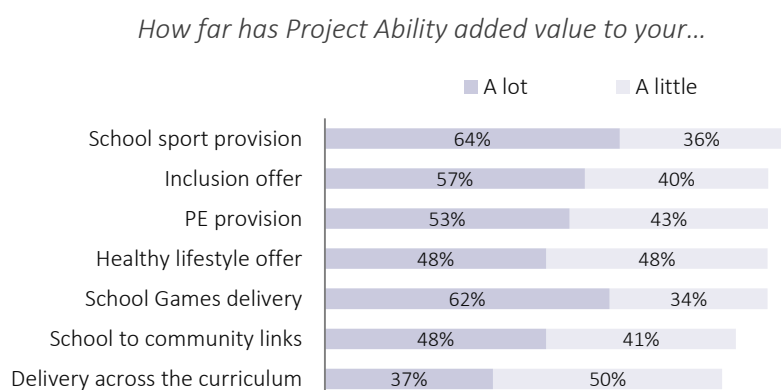


Figure 4. Impact across the school (School Sport Workforce Survey, n=58)

~ 73%

of the 58 respondents to the School Sport Workforce Survey report that Project Ability has helped increase their confidence, competence and motivation to deliver inclusive PE and school sport

“

*There has been a real change in practice, there have been more schools and more SEND leaders at Level 2 games and so more children taking part in Level 2 inclusive events. Schools are buying more adaptive equipment to support their children and running Inclusive Level 1 events. Schools have really embraced inclusion.*

Inclusion Lead, interview

“

*A really important outcome of Project Ability is that there are now more schools willing to work in partnership and open to inclusive practice. It's about inspiring the next generation of teachers to be inclusive.*

Teacher, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*At our Step into Sport camp young SEND leaders delivered what we promoted as a mini inclusive TOP Sportsability training session to the teachers in the afternoon, which worked really well.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns

## Activities, Achievements & Challenges

This section explores how the impact of Project Ability shown in 'Impact & Insight' has been achieved. It highlights aspects of the programme seen as useful to delivery, successful in engaging young people and effective in achieving outcomes. It also reflects on some of the challenges experienced. Data informing this section are drawn from *spear's* Young Leader and School Sport Workforce Surveys, YST monitoring returns, and interviews with teachers and participants at Step into Sport events and the site visit school.

### Activities & events

Inclusion Lead Schools play a focal role in providing, promoting and supporting inclusive events and competition pathways. Examples include the School Games, Ability Games, Panathalons and Festivals. Greater awareness of these events, through Project Ability, is reported to have increased the number of schools attending, and subsequently the number of young people with SEND taking part. Inclusion Leads also report an increased commitment among SGOs to provide inclusive competition formats, in some cases, for the first time.

Case studies presented at appendix E show that Step into Sport Inclusive Leadership events are widely perceived to provide a platform for engagement in the activities and events identified above. The Inclusion Lead at the site visit school explained that the chance for her young leaders to mix with young people from different schools and with different abilities was key to observed increases in communication skills, self-esteem, aspirations and confidence. Staff interviewed at the events also commented on the importance of encouraging young leaders with SEND to work independently of their teachers, something that young leaders, and their teachers, found challenging at times. However, this was seen as important in fostering the confidence and resilience necessary for the young people to overcome perceived barriers to engagement and embrace the leadership and advocacy opportunities provided through Project Ability.

Data from the Young Leader Survey suggest that almost half of young leaders 'loved' taking part in Step into Sport (49%) and just under half 'liked' it (48%). Only 2% of respondents (n=12) said they didn't enjoy the event; one young leader with a hearing impairment found it too noisy, while others found the content insufficiently challenging. The 'best part of the day' cited by a third of young leaders was the 'Skills and qualities of a leader or role model' because "it was interesting and inspirational". Just under a third (30%) cited 'Delivering engaging activity and competition' because "everyone could take part in the activities and no one was left out". A fifth of young leaders thought 'Introduction to STEP' was the best part, while 16% cited 'Action planning'.

“

*The competitions are giving children a chance to compete outside of school. Many would not have these opportunities to compete if these competitions were not taking place.*

Teacher, School Sport Workforce Survey

“

*We have made great progress in encouraging mainstream schools to send their young people to our inclusive festivals and our participation figures reflect this.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns

“

*Step into Sport has provided a platform for young leaders to help at local and county based events. A number of students continue to engage in competitive sporting opportunities which are officiated by young leaders.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns

“

*The best part of Step into Sport was when my confidence rised up and I felt like I could do anything.*

Young Leader, Step into Sport event

## Delivery, resources & support

Aspects of Project Ability reported by schools as effective in engaging participants are shown in figure 5. The chance to have fun, be more active, lead activities and play new sports and games are seen as key to the appeal of the programme. The TOP Sportsability resources are rated effective in engaging participants ‘a lot’ by over 90% of teachers from SEN schools (91%) but by less than half of teachers in mainstream settings (48%). Teachers from SEN schools (88%) also view ‘an element of competition’ as more effective in engaging participants than their mainstream counterparts (56%).

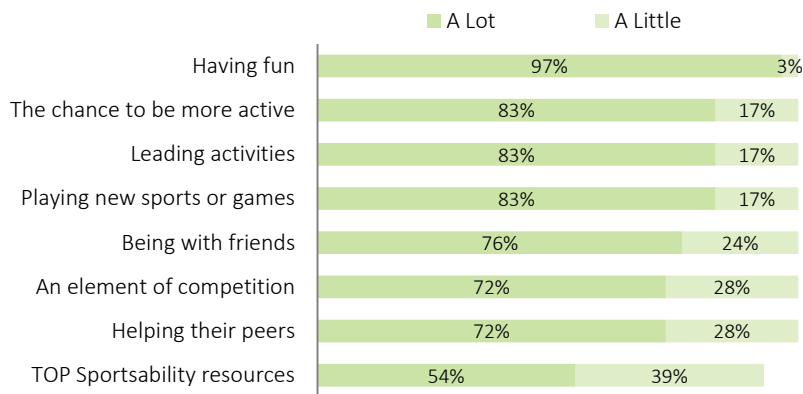


Figure 5. Programme aspects effective in engaging participants (School Sport Workforce Survey, n=58)

While the sample is small, all five teachers in schools other than Inclusion Lead Schools view the training and support from Inclusion Lead Schools as central to their delivery of the programme. Around three quarters of all respondents value support from their school and from YST Athlete Mentors, and rate Step into Sport events and links to the School Games as useful to delivery ‘a lot’ (figure 6). While the Regional Inclusion Training scores more moderately, 86% of the 53 respondents from Inclusion Lead Schools cite this as useful to delivery either ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’.

Over half of schools use volunteers to support delivery of Project Ability (57%), over a third use PE and Sport Premium funding (37%) and just under a fifth use Pupil Premium funding (17%). Less than a third of schools use paid external coaches to support delivery (30%).

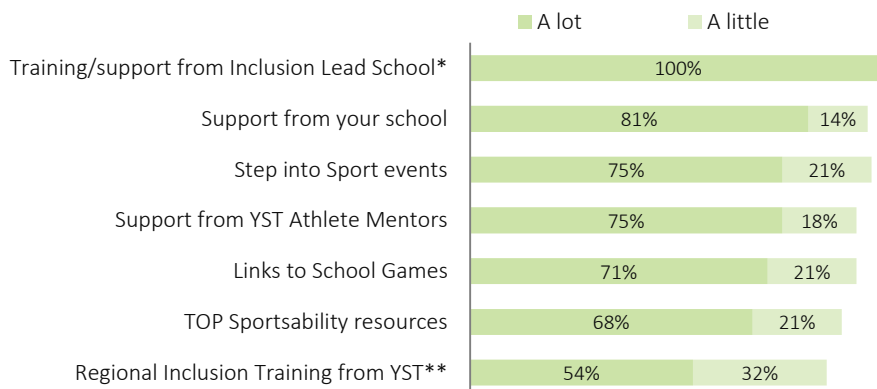


Figure 6. Resources and support (School Sport Workforce Survey, n=58, \*not Lead Inclusion Schools, n=5; \*\* Inclusion Lead Schools, n=53)

“

*The idea of our students playing and interacting with mainstream students has given our students a massive lift in confidence. The message has been fed into the wider school community and many year 7's are excited to take part in the project, with the possibility of making new friends the biggest benefit stated by potential participants. Our young leaders have grown in confidence and developed their ability to plan and run events.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns



## Embedding & Sustaining

The positive impact of Project Ability on young people, schools and partner organisations is reflected in the commitment expressed by stakeholders to embed inclusive practice as an integral, sustainable part of their PE, school and community sport offer.

Increased demand for pupil leadership opportunities, inclusive PE training and inclusive competition formats is evident from responses to the School Sport Workforce Survey, YST monitoring returns and interviews with teachers. Inclusion Leads note that the number of young people with SEND accessing the School Games has increased and that more mainstream schools are attending inclusive competitions. Schools are reported to be creating their own intra-school events replicating activities from Step into Sport, while Step into Sport young leaders are reported to be successfully supporting the School Games and events. Engagement in Project Ability is widely seen to have led to an increase in meaningful activity, leadership and competitive opportunities for young people, including those with SEND.

Feedback for the programme is largely positive, however, challenges to implementing, embedding and sustaining Project Ability have been experienced and are reported by Inclusion Leads. Funding concerns, specifically clarity around funding streams, feature strongly among the comments. The challenge of securing the engagement and commitment of all SGOs is also reported alongside a lack of interest in inclusive events on the part of some mainstream schools. It is felt that greater advocacy work with SGOs may encourage them to deliver more inclusive events, which may, in turn, spark greater interest among mainstream schools. Other Leads have experienced difficulties engaging SEN schools in the School Games, but have found working with these schools to ensure provision of inclusive or adapted activities has enhanced engagement. Monitoring young leaders trained at Step into Sport is a further challenge identified by Inclusion Lead. However, improved communication between schools has helped increase their awareness of what young leaders are doing so they can share their successes and assist with their challenges.

While challenges have been experienced, it is evident from communication with stakeholders that DfE funding and YST networks and delivery expertise are pivotal to the reach and impact of Project Ability. The programme's inclusion focus is central to the support and enthusiasm demonstrated by stakeholders, while its potential to support whole school agenda and diminish the differences for young people with SEND has helped secure the buy in of schools.

For the young people themselves, the chance to try, and to shape, new activities and experiences is welcomed and endorsed. A selection of responses from young participants to the question 'If a friend was thinking about doing Project Ability, what would you say to them?' are presented on the following page. Key Messages for Successful Inclusive Practice are also presented, providing recommendations for implementing, embedding and sustaining inclusive practice and the programme as a whole.

“

*The Inclusive events and training we are offering are proving very popular with schools and I feel that schools are really starting to come on board with 'Project Ability'. I have great support from the SGOs who are promoting events to their schools and supporting at events.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns

“

*Schools are now requesting to borrow wheelchairs for curriculum/club development and one school now has over 20 people keen to take part in an inclusive extracurricular club on a regular basis.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns

“

*Some SGOs are still not delivering inclusive events and not showing much of an intention to change. This is only the minority now but still frustrating.*

Inclusion Lead, YST monitoring returns



## If a friend was thinking about doing Project Ability, what would you say to them?



# Key Messages for Successful Inclusive Practice

## 5 Key Messages for Successful Inclusive Practice

### 1. A role for every young person

There is a role for each and every young person; they can plan, organise, participate, lead, coach, officiate and cheerlead. Help them find the starting point of their journey by allowing them to choose a role they are comfortable in, and can progress from.



### 2. Stepping stones

Provide small stepping stones to activity and leadership opportunities and let young people take these steps at their own pace. Support the development of transferable skills by encouraging application in a range of contexts.

### 3. Competent professionals

Inclusive practice is a collective task and different stakeholders have different roles and responsibilities to fulfill. Play your role by embracing opportunities to develop the skills and confidence you need to practise and promote inclusion.



### 4. Inclusion benefits all

Inclusion benefits everyone; it is a means of raising achievement through the presence (access to opportunities), participation (quality of the experience) and achievement (learning processes and outcomes) of *all* learners.

### 5. Collect, reflect and share

Evidence-based decision-making is critical for the effective development of inclusive practice. Look for ways to evidence impact and find out what works, what doesn't, and why. Share this evidence as widely as possible to inform policy and investment and support provision and practice.



# Appendix A

## Methodological Note

### Young People & Step into Sport Young Leader Surveys

The 300 target sample for Young People and Step into Sport Young Leader Survey returns was selected to achieve a MME  $< \pm 5\%$  on the basis of YST output targets for Project Ability in 2016/17. While this sample could not be guaranteed due to the timescale and budget for the evaluation, the sample of survey returns from all participants exceeds the target samples for both surveys. YST output targets for the programme have been exceeded, increasing the population size and the associated MME. However, data from the Young People and Step into Sport Young Leader Surveys retain a MME circa  $\pm 5\%$ .

Sub-analyses by school type, gender, SEND status, Step into Sport training and length of programme engagement have been conducted and are reported where significant effects are identified. However, these data have a MME  $> \pm 5\%$  and must be viewed with caution.

The Young People and Step into Sport Young Leader Surveys were designed as quizzes to assess key process and outcome indicators for the programme. To increase accessibility and the validity and reliability of responses, surveys were produced in Clear Print, Easy Read formats, with questions written in plain language (measured against the Flesch Reading Ease for readability) and with age appropriate, validated graphics (Easy Read pictures). The Young People and Step into Sport Young Leader Surveys and all research approaches were scrutinised by *spear's* quality assurance lead and disability expert, Professor Jan Burns.

All schools participating in the research were supported through *spear's* sustained relationship management, with written guidance for completion of surveys provided to schools alongside informed consent and data protection forms. Due to the limited timescale for the 2016/17 programme and evaluation, schools were asked to complete surveys in the first and sixth week of engagement in the programme in 2016/17.

### School Sport Workforce Survey

For the School Sport Workforce Survey, the sample to achieve a MME  $< \pm 5\%$  for teachers from all participating schools is circa 360, from Inclusion Lead Schools circa 47, and from other participating schools circa 360. No target sample was specified, or guaranteed for this survey due to the timescale and budget for the evaluation, and because contact details for Inclusion Lead Schools only were available to *spear*. The School Sport Workforce Survey was completed by 58 teachers; 53 from Inclusion Lead Schools and 5 from other participating schools. Data from this survey have a MME  $> \pm 5\%$  and must be viewed with caution.

### Maximum Margin of Error (MME)

The MME shows the level of accuracy the participant sample has; the smaller the MME, the greater the accuracy. It is calculated at the standard 95% confidence level so we can be 95% confident that the sample results reflect the population results to within the MME. For example, if the survey sample has a MME of  $\pm 5\%$  and 50% of participants say they 'enjoy being active', if the survey were conducted 100 times, the percentage who state they 'enjoy being active' would range between 45% and 55% most (95%) of the time.

### Statistical significance

Throughout this report, where changes in participants' responses are reported, they are significant at  $p < .05$ . This means there is a less than a 5% chance that the changes reported are not real changes that might be expected in the wider population beyond the sample.

## Data analyses


Throughout this report, data presented from the Young People, Step into Sport Young Leader and School Sport Workforce Surveys represent the responses of all participants unless otherwise specified. For the Young People Surveys, sub-analyses by school type, gender, SEND status, Step into Sport training and length of programme engagement have been conducted; for the Step into Sport Young Leader Surveys, sub-analyses by school type, gender and SEND status have been conducted; and for the School Sport Workforce Survey, sub-analyses by school type, Lead Inclusion status and respondent role have been conducted. The results of these sub-analyses are only reported where there are significant effects. For example, analysis of data from all respondents to the Young People Survey identified a significant increase in the extent to which participants think they are good at sports 'every day'. Sub-analysis by gender revealed that while the percentage of boys and girls who think they are good at sports 'everyday' increases between weeks 1 and 6 of engagement, the magnitude of change is only significant for young female participants, and this effect is reported.

Upscaled participation figures are derived from YST monitoring returns from Inclusion Lead Schools. Responses have been received from 48/52 and 47/53 relevant Inclusion Lead Schools, and this allows total participation in the programme to be estimated with a MME circa +/-4%. Matching this data with our own cross sectional survey of young leaders and young participants we are able to estimate the success of the programme in reaching key target groups with a MME circa +/-5%.


# Appendix B

## Young People Survey


SEND



**Project Ability Young People Quiz**



**We want to know what you like about taking part in Project Ability and how you feel about being active. Being active means taking part in sports, games and activities that make you feel warm and make your heart beat faster.**



**This year I have been doing Project Ability for...**  
(please tick - ask your teacher if you don't know)





About 1 week       About 6 weeks

My name is  I am a (please tick) Boy  Girl





My school is called  I am in Year Group

Did you take part in Project Ability last year? (please tick) Yes  No

**About me (please tick)**






	Week 	Week 	Week 	Week 
	Every day	Most days	Some days	No days
I feel confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I come up with new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I help other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I try again if I don't get something right first time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to listen to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like learning at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am good at solving problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I share my ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel I can achieve anything I want to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Me and being active (please tick)**

	Week 	Week 	Week 	Week 
	Every day	Most days	Some days	No days
I do more than 60 minutes of physical activity where my heart beats faster	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel happy when I am being active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think I am good at sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like playing sports and games with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel confident leading activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think being healthy and active is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can encourage others to join in activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do more than 30 minutes of physical activity where my heart beats faster	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What I like about Project Ability (please tick)**

If you have only just started Project Ability, you do not need to answer any more questions.

	 Love it	 Like it	 Don't like it	 Hate it	 Haven't done it
Having fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning new things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being with friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing sport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leading activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing to win	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing my ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Now that I do Project Ability...**

You can tick more than 1

I play more sports and games than before

I lead more sports and games than before

I want to play more sports and games than before

**If a friend was thinking about doing Project Ability, what would you say to them?**

**Thank you for filling in our Quiz!**

# Step into Sport Young Leader Survey

SEND

**PROJECT ABILITY  
STEP INTO SPORT DAY QUIZ**

We would like to know what you think about the YST Step into Sport Day. If you need any help with the following questions please ask your teacher.

We would like to know a bit about you...

My name is

I am a (please tick ✓) Boy  Girl

My school is called

I am in Year Group

spear  
support to create, grow and sustain leaders  
in our schools

What did you think of the Step into Sport Day (please tick ✓)

Loved it  Liked it  Did not like it  Hated it

After taking part in the Step into Sport Day I think... (please tick ✓)

	A lot	A little	Not much	Not at all
Being active is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking part in activities where my heart beats faster is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking part in fun activities is important	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a more confident leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a better leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

After today how confident do you feel in... (please tick ✓)

	A lot	A little	Not much	Not at all
Taking part in activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning new things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing my ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking on new challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solving problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trying again if I do not get something right the first time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leading activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making other people feel welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making activities fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing activities so everyone can take part	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What do you think was the best part of the Step into Sport Day?

Please tick ✓

Skills and qualities of a leader or role model

Introduction to STEP

Delivering engaging activity and competition

Action planning

Why do you think that was the best part of the day?

Thank you for completing our quiz!



# Appendix C

## Young People Survey data

*About me (week 1 n=317, week 6 n=317)*

	Every day		Most days		Some days		No days	
	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6
I come up with new ideas	26%	28%	33%	31%	34%	34%	7%	7%
I am good at solving problems	30%	30%	37%	31%	26%	31%	8%	9%
I feel I can achieve anything I want to	30%	40%	40%	30%	25%	23%	4%	7%
I share my ideas	36%	45%	33%	24%	22%	24%	9%	7%
I feel confident	37%	48%	34%	33%	25%	18%	4%	2%
I like learning at school	43%	52%	27%	29%	24%	13%	6%	6%
I like to listen to other people	53%	58%	30%	25%	15%	14%	3%	2%
I try again if I don't get something right first time	49%	47%	34%	28%	15%	20%	3%	4%
I help other people	47%	52%	35%	29%	16%	17%	2%	2%
I feel happy	55%	60%	31%	30%	12%	9%	2%	1%

*Me & being active (week1 n=317, week 6 n=317)*

	Every day		Most days		Some days		No days	
	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6	Wk1	Wk6
I do more than 60 minutes of physical activity	28%	27%	32%	32%	31%	34%	9%	7%
I feel happy when I am being active	53%	57%	29%	29%	14%	11%	4%	3%
I think I am good at sports	44%	54%	28%	26%	23%	17%	5%	3%
I like playing sports and games with others	58%	64%	24%	20%	14%	14%	4%	3%
I feel confident leading activities	35%	44%	27%	21%	27%	21%	11%	14%
I think being healthy and active is important	67%	69%	21%	20%	9%	8%	3%	3%
I can encourage others to join in activities	45%	46%	32%	27%	18%	20%	4%	7%
I do more than 30 minutes of physical activity	37%	39%	36%	31%	22%	24%	5%	6%

*What I like about Project Ability (week 6 n=317)*

	Love it	Like it	Don't like it	Hate it	Haven't done it
Having fun	74%	25%	0%	0%	1%
Learning new things	56%	40%	3%	0%	0%
Being with friends	79%	19%	0%	1%	0%
Playing sport	66%	29%	4%	1%	1%
Leading activities	40%	35%	12%	4%	8%
Playing to win	56%	34%	8%	2%	1%
Sharing my ideas	42%	42%	9%	5%	2%
Helping others	62%	34%	2%	1%	1%
Feeling happy	83%	15%	1%	1%	0%

*Now that I do Project Ability (week 6 n=317)*

I play more sports and games than before	75%
I lead more sports and games than before	53%
I want to play more sports and games than before	73%



## Step into Sport Young Leader Survey data

*After taking part in the Step into Sport Day I think... (n=506)*

	A lot	A little	Not much	Not at all
Being active is important	82%	17%	1%	0%
Taking part in activities where my heart beats faster is important	63%	33%	4%	1%
Taking part in fun activities is important	73%	25%	2%	0%
I am a more confident leader	50%	40%	6%	4%
I am a better leader	51%	40%	6%	4%

*After today how confident do you feel in... (n=506)*

	A lot	A little	Not much	Not at all
Sharing my ideas	56%	34%	7%	3%
Leading activities	57%	33%	6%	4%
Planning activities	57%	33%	7%	3%
Solving problems	58%	34%	7%	1%
Changing activities so everyone can take part	72%	23%	4%	2%
Trying again if I do not get something right the first time	71%	24%	3%	1%
Making activities fun	74%	21%	4%	1%
Taking on new challenges	71%	25%	2%	2%
Taking part in activities	75%	22%	2%	1%
Making other young people feel welcome	77%	20%	2%	1%
Learning new things	75%	23%	1%	1%

*What did you think of the Step into Sport Day? (n=506)*

Loved it	Liked it	Didn't like it	Hated it
49%	48%	2%	0%

*What do you think was the best part of the day? (n=506)*

Skills and qualities of a leader or role model	33%
Introduction to STEP	20%
Delivering engaging activity and competition	30%
Action planning	16%

# Appendix D

## Diary corner



## Graffiti wall

