Active Play

FOR ATTAINMENT IN GLASGOW

Progress Report 2017/18

INSPIRING SCOTLAND

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Executive Summary

The report details the impact and outputs generated through the second year of our three-year programme of Active Play delivery for Glasgow City Council's Department of Education, covering the 2017/2018 Academic year.

The program is delivered and managed by Inspiring Scotland, in partnership with play charities: the Jeely Piece Club, FARE and PEEK; and with research undertaken by the University of Strathclyde; and with AGILE in support on training and development.

During this last academic year, the program has supported: -

- 400 Active play sessions took place
- 40 Schools participated
- 1,508 children took part across Play Champs and Active Play
- 178 teachers and Support for Learning Workers received in-service day Active Play training
    - 2 CPD sessions delivered
- 320 Play Champions sessions were delivered with 388 children engaging in Play Champion's training.

Evidence continues to be gathered to support impact on each of the agreed outcomes, with the evaluation noting that the programme continues to be well received by the schools, teachers and support staff during this second academic year. The schools have positively engaged with the programme and the delivery standards of the play charities have been consistently high.

Research continued this year with the University of Strathclyde Department for Physical Activity and Health focussing on 4 randomised control trials undertaken in Cohort 5. These trials were to review aspects of the impact that active play had on the children, and this data is now collated, and the report is attached in Appendix 1. We are delighted to see the results the programme has had since its inception. The research shows that the impact on physical activity was incremental and positive. When considering this in conjunction with evaluation conducted by FMR the results of which show a cultural change in the children and teachers. With the children and teachers taking their learning from Active Play and applying it to lesson planning and breaktimes, with children noting for themselves their increased confidence, 'health' and their engagement in more physical activity through clubs and further outdoor play. Collectively this is promising and will provides strong additional evidence of the benefits of the programme when the University of Strathclyde research is complete and published. FMR's research is also attached in its entirety and will be pivotal in promoting the success of our partnership – this is in Appendix 2.

We have been able to share our experiences and learnings from Active Play at the International Play Association Triennial conference in Calgary and discuss the work of Active Play and Glasgow's outdoor early learning models with the Australian Council of Education Leaders. We also in this year co-hosted a successful

event with Glasgow City Council at the Lighthouse in June raising the profile of Active Play with fellow Challenge Authorities. We have been invited back to speak at Early Childhood Education Conference in Melbourne Australia which offers a further opportunity to promote this Glasgow model to raise attainment.

Background

Inspiring Scotland has partnered with GCC Department of Education for the last six years on a range of programmes focused on supporting youth employability, early years and play. Our partnership extends to jointly supporting Glasgow's third sector, promoting health and well-being initiatives, collaborating on mentoring programmes and on early learning and childcare provision, and coordinating Connect 2, a collaborative youth employment programme for 16+ young people.

Following the evidence of impact gained from our 2015 investment in Jeely Piece Club and two primary schools in Castlemilk, GCC Department of Education engaged Inspiring Scotland to build increased capacity for Active Play as part of Glasgow's Improvement Challenge. The Glasgow's Improvement Challenge aims to improve children's Health and well-being through nurturing approaches and increasing participation in physical activity and sport.

With GCC, Inspiring Scotland, through its Go2Play programme now renamed Thrive Outdoors, invested in two third sector organisations based in Glasgow, PEEK and Jeely Piece Club, to work with 30 primary schools in year 1. In year 2 we recruited and trained a new charity, FARE to join the program. Through this year we have worked with 40 primary schools and this report refers solely to the activity supported that time. Through this year the program continues to complement the great activity delivered by GCC's Physical Education, Physical Activity and School Sport (PEPASS) team seeking to embed a joy of physical activity and increase children's overall physical literacy.

Inspiring Scotland's team coordinate and lead the collaboration between the charities, research partners at the University of Strathclyde's Department for Physical Activity and Health and AGILE, who provide training on physical literacy, support on evaluation and quality assurance on the delivery by the paly workers in the schools.

The key outcomes from the programme are:

- Children have increased levels of physical activity;
- Children develop confidence and self-esteem;
- Children develop physical literacy and improved fundamental movement skills (FMS);
- Awareness of play as a means to improved physical literacy is increased.

The programme model achieves these outcomes through:

- Building the skills and confidence of play sector charity partners to deliver more physical activities;

- Building the awareness of teachers and schools of the benefits of physical activity and supporting them to build the skills, confidence and capacity to facilitate more physical activity.

Outcomes:

1. Children increase levels of physical activity

Through the research conducted[1] there was found to be an incremental change in the level of physical activity the children undertook with a percentage increase in MVPA from baseline to follow up. With children spending 33 minutes of their school day engaged in MVPA – with current national guidelines standing at 60 mins per day this contributes to over half their requirement being met by schools which is over the recommended limit of 30 mins for schools to achieve. The full details are in Appendix 1.

However, the picture is further strengthened by the external full programme evaluation. FMR[2] were commissioned to review all the evaluation documents collated for Active Play, including Play Champs, for year 2. This substantial piece of work has reaped many benefits for all involved in the partnership. From this evaluation it clearly notes how children viewed their own physical activity and indeed the change they had seen in themselves.

Through self-perception at the baseline children were asked to comment and reflect on how active they were.

- An average of 8.5 children per class identified themselves as least active at the beginning and this reduced to 3.6 by the end of the programme.
- In contrast, an average of 6.8 children per class identified themselves as most active at the start of the programme, and this increased to 12.3 by the end of the 10 weeks.

> *"The children are active, lasting longer without stopping for a rest and walking when they should be running. They now can run for the length of a full game."*
>
> *"The children are running faster and jumping more and have been running for longer periods of time during their daily mile. The teacher has said they would give up and walk before active play but are more keen to run for longer since being involved."*

[1] Full document 'Findings from the Active Play programme: a feasibility cluster randomised controlled trial is in Appendix 1
[2] Full document 'Report – Active Play and Play Champs – Second Academic Year Evaluation Data'

2. Children develop confidence and self-esteem

Through the FMR evaluation it was clear through the responses to the baseline, mid and end point evaluations conducted with pupils, teachers and support for learning workers that Active Pay impacted positively on the children's confidence can self-esteem.

The softer outcomes measured through the various evaluative techniques and timelines through each 10-week intervention period showed when quantified that: -

- improved confidence/motivation (90% of schools);
- greater participation levels (70%);
- imaginative/more creative play (78%);
- improved relationships/making new friends (90%); and
- team working (85%), for example.

…and impacts of particular relevance to educational attainment:

- children are more engaged/have improved focus in class (60% of schools);
- children with additional needs or socially isolated are taking part (40%);
- improved relationships between class and teacher (53%);
- improved communications (53%); and
- improved behaviour, usually relating to an individual child with negative behaviours exhibited at the start (45%).

The full report is attached in Appendix 2 and provides greater detail, anecdotes and case studies gathered from the data. The figures are collated figures across all cohorts in year 2 and across all the participating schools. The Evaluation provides evidence the children have benefitted from a breadth and depth of positive experiences that they have also chosen to engage with.

Reflecting on both Outcome 1 and 2, we sought to analyse if children's behaviour develops and changes through the Active Play experiences. Evidence indicates they are: -

- 53% children noted they are trying new activities out with Active Play
- 55% children are attending new clubs
- 43% children are spending more time outside (not at Active Play)

"The teacher said they have seen a difference in activity levels and more people in the class are joining the after-school sports club."

"Kids have been building on social skills, strengthening friendships and developing new ones. Children are playing with each other who didn't before, which is great. There is a new boy in the class who has been very overwhelmed and struggled to make friends especially at play time. The play sessions have created an opportunity for him to make new friendships and put himself out there."

3. Children develop physical literacy/improved fundamental movement skills (FMS)

The University of Strathclyde conducted one of their Randomised Control Trials on FMS and through this research and the initial research conducted in 2015/2016 the University with Glasgow City Councils supports sits on the largest set of Fundamental Movement Skills data in Scotland to which colleagues in Scottish Governments Active Scotland division are keen to review.

During this RCT the intervention groups total FMS Score improved from 88 (27th Percentile) at baseline to 91(31st percentile) at follow up, considered to be a statistically significant change. However, the is scope for improvement still and for work to continue as is it recommended that children should score 100 (or 50th percentile) to be classed as 'average' [3]

However, through the evaluation feedback teachers and play workers noted the following from observations during the sessions: -

- 98% trying new Fundamental Movement Shills during Active Play
- 93% children improved existing fundamental movement skills through the Active Play sessions
- 90% showing more confidence /motivation in/out of Active Play sessions

So, although the improvement is limited at the time of data collection the change in behaviours and desire to be more active will have a longer-term effect on both the children's physical activity levels and their fundamental movement skills.

[3] Ulrich DA. Test of Gross Motor Development – 2 Austin (Prod-Ed 2000)

4. Awareness of Play as a means to improved physical literacy is increased

This outcome is equally attributable to the motivations and awareness for children and teachers/support for learning workers who engaged in Active Play through this second academic year. This also directly correlates to the work the PELO's have been delivering in Primary 1 and 2 classes concurrently with our work in P3 and P4 classes for Active Play, raising the awareness of and delivery Physical Literacy sessions for the schools.

To raises awareness, we provide in service day training, meet with each Head Teacher prior to engagement and work closely with the Class Teacher supporting them to understand and value active play as a key delivery vehicle for physical literacy. The approach over the 10weeks of delivery saw the play charities lead for the first few weeks and support / hand the baton onto the class teacher for the final few weeks, so that by week 10 the teacher felt confident and able to deliver 'active' active play sessions and following mantra of ensuring it is Fun Active and Inclusive.

When reviewed at the end of the 10 weeks teacher's responses where: -

- 45% felt they have improved knowledge of games and developing new games and ideas
- 28% noting how much their own confidence has improved in their own delivery of Active Play.

"The teacher now feels confident to take on active play and is going to keep active play running at the same time when we leave as she feels the children have increased the listening skills, confidence and ability to play independently and she feels the children then go on to work better after active play."

"The class teacher…..has told us she plans to continue active play with her class and would love to have it at a similar time to enable her to still benefit from how engaged the children are after the session. She is also wanting to pass on her learning to other teachers within the school."

Sustainability

Key to Active Play is to use the charities to impart an enthusiasm and awareness of what Active Play can deliver for schools, how its delivery supports the curriculum for excellence and delivers quite specifically against the Health and Wellbeing outcomes. However Active Play can also impact positively on behaviours, helping to change patterns and mindsets both within children and the adults who support them. Therefore, we feel it is imperative that during and after the 10-week intervention we offer support to enable these fledgling positive impacts in behaviours to continue to develop.

For Teachers and Support for Learning workers we provided 2 CPD sessions and used that to amplify the support available online for Teachers on the "Actify" website https://www.actify.org.uk/activeplay. Within this Active Play Hub, there are videos and slides available to enable Teachers to refresh their knowledge, review new games and use as an updated resource to support in class and during delivery.

We also know that many of schools quickly realise the benefit of using local third sector organisations to support their aims, with Teachers noting the 'buy in' and engagement that these organisations have with the children in the community and in turn their parents.
Throughout each cohort over both years this program has operated, we have seen the play charities being approached to come back to the Schools after the 10-week intervention to provide on-going support to the school.

- 78% of Teachers (and SfLW) plan to continue with Active Play in their class
- 35% of Teachers noted they were using learning/games from Active Play to further develop their PE lessons
- 28% of Teachers noted they are promoting and/or rolling it out to other teachers and classes in their school

With only 15% seeking continued input from the charities on purely Active Play alone thus indicating the class teacher's ability to deliver it for themselves, with approximately 80% of schools seeking continued engagement with the play charities in areas such as, but not limited to, Breakfast Clubs, Lunchtime Play sessions, after school support, community-based play interventions, supporting ideas for loose parts play and indeed outdoor play training,

In addition, FARE worked closely with Youth Scotland on the roll out of the Hi5 Award https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/awards/hi5-awards/ The Hi5 Award has been credit rated and levelled by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). To gain a Hi5 Award, children can choose a challenge, complete a minimum of 5 hours of activity, think about and comment on their achievements and gather evidence of their

participation. This model has fitted well with the Play Champs activity and enables the children who participated not only to enjoy the sessions and achieve many of the outcomes noted but this also supported increased confidence as it enabled the children to achieve this award.

Additional Impact

Additional Support Needs

Much comment was made through this year pertaining to children who had additional support needs with 20% of teachers making comment about the challenges faced and 18% of schools noting that their children with additional support needs did not play well together (bickering, telling on each other and needing adult intervention for resolution). FMR through reviewing all the commentary felt that it was clear to see progress being made in every setting over the course of the 10week programme. With teachers noting the children building social skills (particularly helpful for those with additional support needs) when working as a team, meeting new people and making new friends, which benefits social integration beyond the play sessions.

- 40% of respondents noted that they now saw children with additional needs or socially isolated children taking part
- 45% of respondents noting improved behaviour, usually relating to an individual child who previously displayed negative behaviours in class/school

'Staff found that children who shy away from physical activity at school found it easier to take part in Active Play sessions.'

'…one of the young people who is in a wheelchair has become so much more independent and through Active Play she is more willing to challenge herself and do more things on her own. The same young person has been trying lots of new activities'

'Kids have been building on social skills, strengthening friendships and developing new ones. Children are playing with each other who didn't before, which is great!'

'A is often in fights and arguments during play time and lunchtime. He finds it difficult to manage his anger and frustration often resulting in him displaying aggression. This has been a big problem and also affects his ability to build relationships with children in his class. This has not been an issue during Active Play. He has been trying new things and has been managing his anger very well, talking about issues and resolving them himself which has been amazing.'

In Conclusion

The academic research conducted through the 4 randomised controls trials of this second academic year pointed to incremental positive changes supporting fundamental movement skills and the level of MVPA the children engaged in. In combining that impact with the FMR evaluation feedback from the schools, teachers and observations we know that the impact of Active Play is deeper and wider than just the physical activity benefits.

The Active Play program has worked to positively engage children in fun, active and inclusive physical activity through games; using the outside space to act as a natural conduit to enable increased activity the program has led to children and teachers/support for learning workers to be more capable and confident when engaging in Active Play.

Children note their increases in physical activity level through games both during sessions and out with, and how this experience has led them to choose to engage in further forms of fun physical activity on offer through the school, through the play charities and through the PEPASS offering. Children expressed how they learnt to share, take turns and play with others they would not normally – increasing their own social skills and awareness, and increasing in their confidence.

Teachers noted they felt more confident in supporting the children to engage in Active Play which lead to schools continuing to deliver and support Active Play and play based learning once the play charities had culminated in their delivery. Teacher noted that this also supported better behaviours in class and in the playground, and also noted the positive impact on those children with additional support needs from within eh classes who benefitted to an even greater degree in growing their confidence, articulating their feelings and engaging positively.

We look forward to supporting Active Play for Attainment through this final year of delivery across Glasgow which will see us working with the final 40 schools and seeing the completed published research of Avril Johnstone of the University of Strathclyde being published – potentially January 2019. This final year will also see Active Play highlighted in Pasi Sahlberg's new book called 'Let the Children Play' articulating the positive impact Active Play has had in schools and on children through this program.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the future of Active Play in Glasgow and how we can share the recent positive evaluation to our shared stakeholders.

Appendix 1.

Finding from the Active Play programme: a feasibility cluster randomised controlled trial
October 2018

Avril Johnstone, Professor John J Reilly and Dr Adrienne Hughes
University of Strathclyde

Findings from the Active Play programme: a feasibility cluster randomised controlled trial

October 2018

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Background

The Active Play programme is a collaboration between Inspiring Scotland and Glasgow City Council's Education Department, which began in August 2016. It is a 10-week programme, which offers a primary 3 or 4 class the opportunity to take part in one-hour weekly sessions of fun, inclusive and active play. The programme combines 30 minutes of games facilitated by playworkers and 30 minutes of free play. It is delivered by three Glasgow play charities, PEEK, the Jeely Piece Club and FARE, with the intention of class teachers delivering the programme beyond the 10 weeks. The programme is being rolled out across Glasgow to 118 schools over the three-year period of investment.

As part of the roll-out of the Active Play programme in Glasgow, Inspiring Scotland and Glasgow City Council have extended their relationship with the University of Strathclyde to research the feasibility and impact of the Active Play programme. This follows on from an evaluation of the Active Play programme in three local authorities in Scotland during 2015-16 when the programme lasted six months[1].

Report Aim

The aim of this report is to present preliminary findings on the feasibility of the Active Play programme and the impact of the programme on children's school day physical activity levels, fundamental movement skills, inhibition and maths fluency.

Acknowledgements

This research was supervised by Professor John J Reilly and Dr Adrienne Hughes. Seven undergraduate students supported data collection and processing: Bronwen McCall, Demi Mitchell, Emma Savage, Victoria MacKay, Darren McWhirter, Erin Campbell and Alan Wright. The University would like to thank the students for their help with this piece of research.

We would also like to thank the eight schools involved in this research and the partners below for their support with the research.

1 Introduction

Promoting good health and wellbeing in childhood is central to future success in life and is at the heart of Scottish policy[2]. Health and wellbeing cover the child's social, physical, emotional and cognitive development, all of which are equally important and should be promoted[3,4]. The Active Play programme aims to improve children's health and wellbeing by working with schools to provide physical activity opportunities through active play.

Engaging in regular physical activity in childhood, particularly moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA), reduces the risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems[2,3]. However, the majority of Scottish children are not reaching the recommended amount of 60 minutes of MVPA per day[5,6].

Related to physical activity are fundamental movement skills (FMS), which are the basic skills children should be competent in such as running, jumping, catching and throwing[7]. If children are competent at performing these skills, they are more likely to engage in sports and physical activity throughout their lifecourse[8]. However, FMS competency is poor in the majority of children from high-income countries[9]. Active play is thought to be a promising way of increasing levels of MVPA and improving FMS competency [1,10]. Furthermore, physical activity programmes involving a combination of MVPA and FMS development have shown improvements in inhibition and maths fluency[11,12].

This feasibility RCT follows on from an initial evaluation of the Active Play programme in 2015-16. Findings from the initial evaluation proved promising, however, at the time, children participated in the programme twice per week for six months. The programme was reduced to 10-weeks so that it could be delivered in 118 schools over a three-year period. Therefore, this report presents initial findings on the feasibility and impact of the 10-week Active Play programme and provides recommendations on how to enhance the programme in the future.

The following questions will be addressed:

- Is the Active Play programme a feasible intervention (process information)?
- Does participating in the Active Play programme increase children's school day physical activity levels?
    - How active are children during an Active Play session?
- Does participating in the Active Play programme improve children's FMS?
- Does participating in the Active Play programme improve children's inhibition?
- Does participating in the Active Play programme improve children's maths fluency?

2 Methods

2.1 Recruitment of schools and overview of procedure

Eight primary schools (one primary 3 class per school) were involved in the research and randomly assigned to either the intervention or waiting-list control group (received the intervention in April 2018 once the research was completed). Baseline data were collected in August and September 2017 and follow-up data were collected in November and December 2017.

Participants has their FMS, inhibition, and maths fluency measured two weeks before the intervention began, and physical activity was measured the following week. The intervention group then participated in the Active Play programme and the control group continued as normal. At week 9 of the programme, physical activity was measured again, and FMS, inhibition and maths fluency were assessed once the Active Play programme finished.

Ethical approval was granted by Glasgow City Council's Education Services and the University of Strathclyde's School of Psychological Sciences and Health Ethics Committee prior to data collection.

2.2 Process information

To develop a deeper understanding of the benefits and weaknesses of the programme we collected process information. This included the number of sessions delivered, if any sessions were delivered indoors due to adverse weather conditions, how long the sessions lasted and the number of sessions each child missed (due to absence etc.).

2.3 Physical activity

2.3.1 School day physical activity

School day physical activity was measured over five school days using an activity monitor called an ActiGraph, which was attached to an elastic waist belt and worn around a child's waist. School day physical activity was measured at baseline (i.e. before the programme began) in August/September 2017, and again at follow-up (i.e. during week 9 of the Active Play programme) in November/December 2017.

Children had to wear the activity monitor for a minimum of three school days at baseline and follow-up to provide a fair representation of their physical activity in a typical school week. Any child who did not wear the monitor for a minimum of three school days was excluded from the data analysis. Data are presented as the proportion of the school day spent in sedentary, light and MVPA at baseline and follow-up.

2.3.2 MVPA content of Active Play

The MVPA content of the Active Play session was measured at week 9 of the programme. The time the session started and finished and what time the facilitated part of the session finished, and free play started were noted by the lead researcher. Data are presented as the percentage of the session spent in MVPA.

2.4 Fundamental movement skills

FMS were measured using the Test of Gross Motor Development 2, which assesses 12 FMS split into locomotor (run, gallop, hop, leap, jump, side step) and object control (strike, dribble, catch, kick, throw, underhand roll)[13]. Each skill comprises of 3-5 components based on how the skill should be performed. If the participant performed each component as described they were scored a '1', or a '0' if they did not. Scores are totalled and adjusted for age and gender to give a total FMS score and percentile, which can be divided into below average, average and above average categories.

FMS were assessed before the programme began and then again once the programme was finished.

2.5 Inhibition

Inhibition is an individual's ability to suppress a behaviour, impulse or desire. Inhibition is implicated in many areas of learning, for example sharing with another child in the playground or classroom. Inhibition was measured using the NIH Toolbox Flanker Test (a common test for assessing inhibition) administered on an Apple iPad.

Children completed the test before the programme began and then again once the programme was finished.

2.6 Maths fluency

Maths fluency is the comprehension of numerical facts and methods and the ability to produce answers efficiently. Maths fluency was measured using the One Minute Basic Number Facts Test (a simple pencil and paper test) in which children are given one minute to answer as many addition and subtraction sums as possible.

Children were assessed before the programme began and then again once the programme was finished.

3 Findings

3.1 Characteristics of study participants

66% of children who were invited to participate in the research provided consent to participate (obtained from the child's primary carer). An overview of the participant's demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Study Participants

Group	Male	Female	Mean Age (years)	% living in 15% most deprived areas
Intervention	34	39	7.1	72% (*n=5 missing)
Control	24	40	7.0	85% (*n= 4 missing)

3.2 Process information

The programme was delivered to a high quality by the local play charities. Children attended most active play sessions; only four children missed two sessions and no children missed more than two sessions. All sessions were outdoors as intended but were often shorter than the planned one hour by approximately 10 minutes per session due to class teachers bringing the participants to the sessions late.

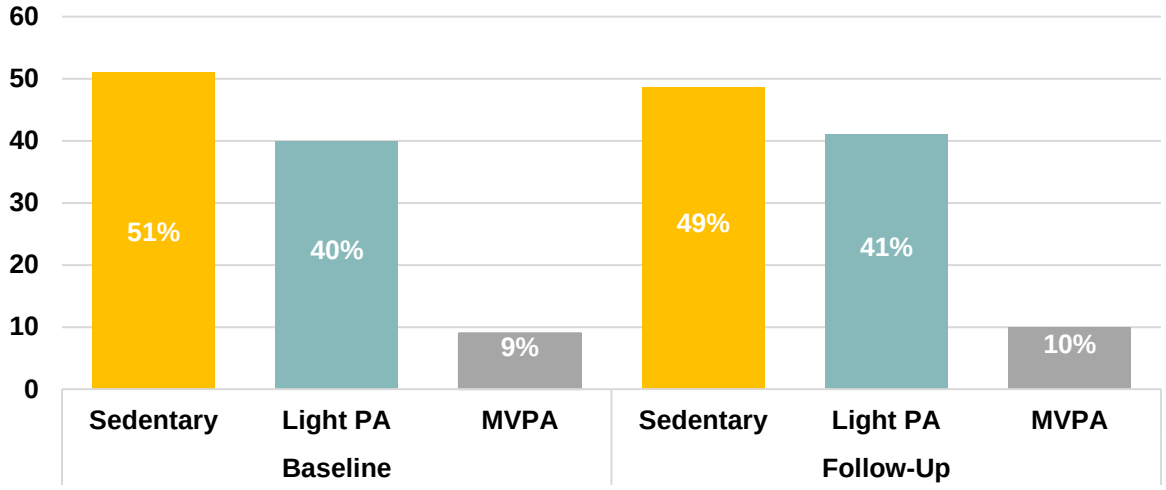
3.3 Physical Activity

3.3.1 Changes in average school day physical activity

There was no improvement in percent time in sedentary behaviour, light physical activity and MVPA in the intervention group compared to the control group

Figure 1 presents the percent time spent in sedentary behaviour, light physical activity and MVPA at baseline and follow-up for the intervention group only. There was a small decline in percent time spent in sedentary behaviour and a small increase in percent time spent in MVPA.

Fig 1. Percent time spent in sedentary behaviour, light physical activity and MVPA at baseline and follow-up



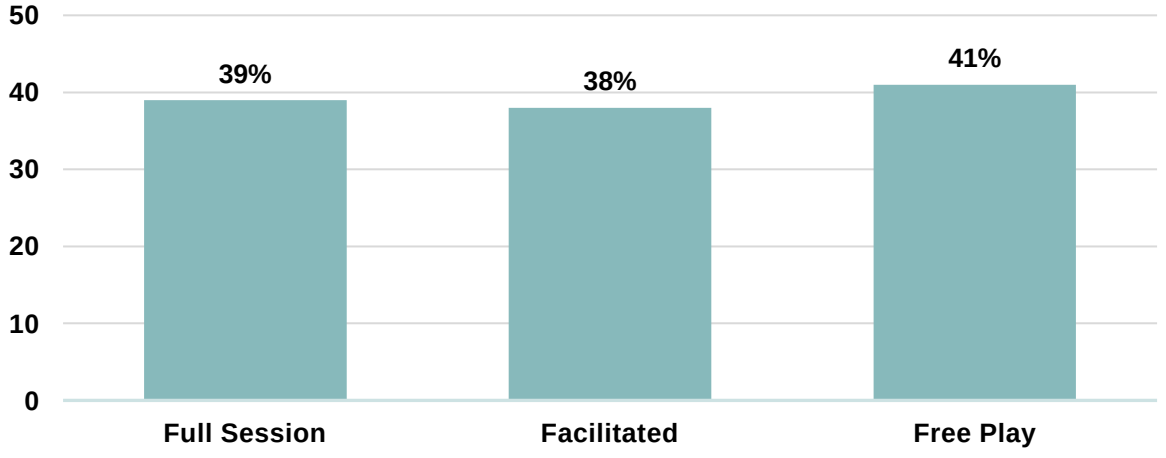
At follow-up children spent on average 33 minutes of their school day in MVPA, which was a 3-minute increase from baseline. It is recommended that children should get half of their physical activity guidelines (30 minutes) at school, so that target was met[14].

3.3.2 MVPA content of an Active Play session

Figure 2 presents the percent time spent in MVPA during an Active Play session. On average, 39% (21 minutes) of the session was spent in MVPA- MVPA is important to receive associated health benefits as mentioned above[3]. The Active Play sessions generate a substantial amount of MVPA compared to other types of physical activity (break times, active commuting, PE) - these types of activity typically have much less MVPA than might be expected[15,16].

Interestingly, during the free play part of the Active Play session (when children are free to choose what they want to play, with limited involvement from play workers) slightly more MVPA is generated (41%) compared with the facilitated part of the session (38%), see Fig 2.

Fig 2. Percent time spent in MVPA during an Active Play session



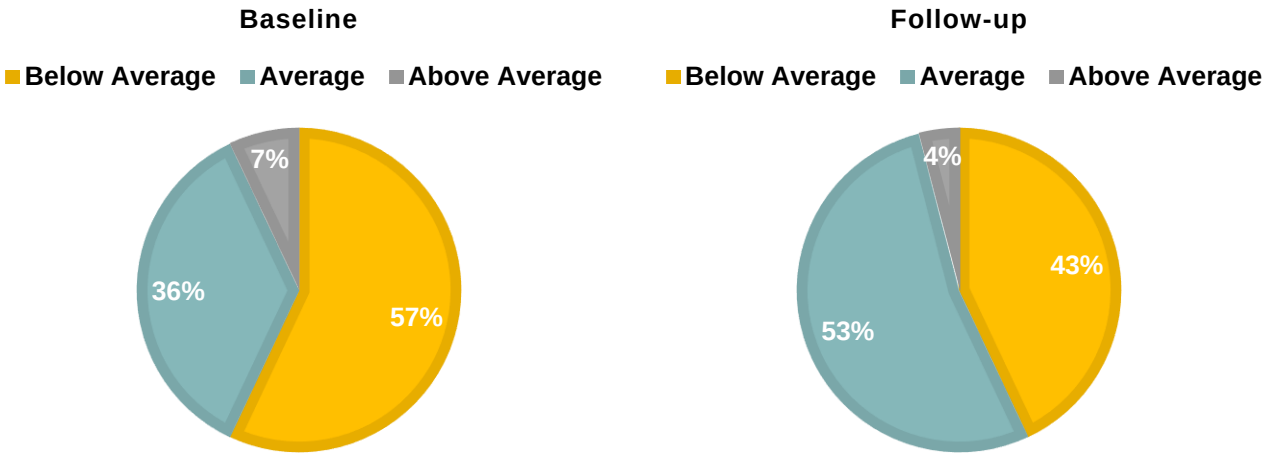
3.4 Fundamental movement skills

There was no improvement in total FMS score and percentile in the intervention group compared to the control group.

For the intervention group, total FMS score improved from 88 (27th percentile) at baseline to 91 (31st percentile) at follow-up, which was a statistically significant change, though at both baseline and follow up FMS were poor compared to the reference data on which the test is based (from US children in the 1980s). It is recommended that children should score 100 (or 50th percentile) to be classed as 'average'[13]

Figure 3 presents the percentage of children with FMS scores in the 'below average', 'average' and 'above average' categories at baseline and follow-up for the intervention group only. The proportion of children with FMS in the below average category decreased by 14% and increased by 17% for the average category from baseline to follow-up.

Fig.3 Changes in FMS score



3.5 Inhibition

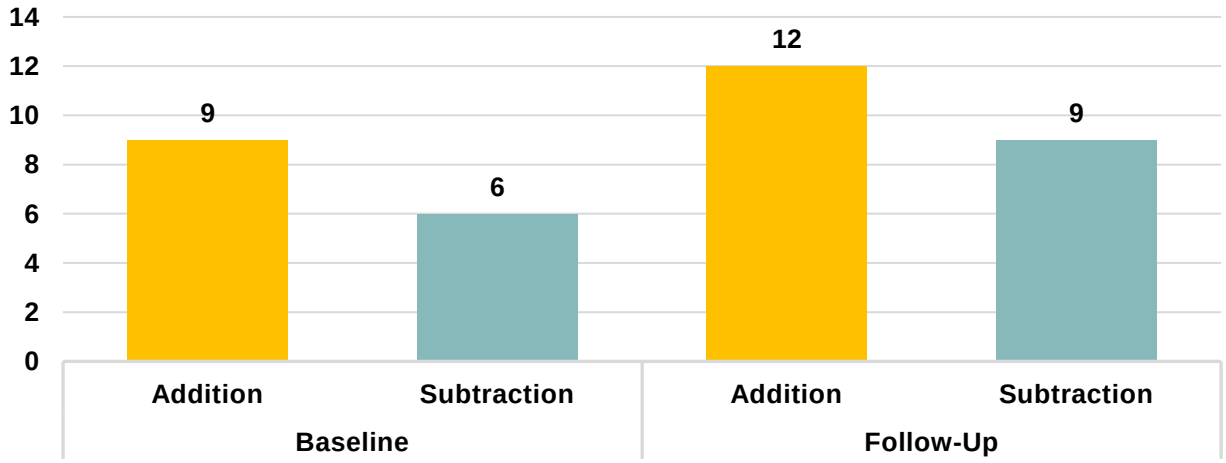
There was no improvement in inhibition score for the intervention group compared to the control group.

3.6 Maths fluency

There was no improvement in maths fluency scores for the intervention group compared to the control group.

Figure 4 presents the changes in addition and subtraction scores from baseline to follow-up for the intervention group. For children aged 7 years, it is recommended that they should be scoring 8 for addition and 7 for subtraction, which the children were exceeding when assessed at follow-up.

Fig 4. Addition and subtraction scores at baseline and follow-up



4 Conclusions

The aim of this report was to present preliminary findings on the feasibility of the Active Play programme and its impact on children's school day physical activity, FMS, inhibition and maths fluency.

Findings suggested that the intervention was delivered to a high quality and children engaged with the programme with only four children missing two sessions. However, sessions were often around 10 minutes shorter than the planned one hour, meaning that children would have missed vital time to engage in physical activity. In fact, missing 10 minutes per session equates to 1 hour and 40 minutes of time scheduled for play (and about 40 minutes of MVPA) over the 10-week period.

The Active Play programme provided children with much needed time spent in MVPA, which is vital to gain associated health benefits[3]. Children spent 39% (21 minutes) of the Active Play session in MVPA, which is higher than time spent in other types of physical activity[15,16]. For example, previous studies have suggested that only 11% of a PE session was spent in MVPA[16]. However, the high levels of MVPA during the active play sessions did not translate into substantial improvements in the proportion of the school day spent in MVPA. The results showed that children spent 9% of the school day in MVPA at baseline, which increased to 10% at follow-up equating to a 3-minute increase in MVPA. This lack of effect on the typical school day reflected the fact that the play sessions took place only once per week, for under one hour.

The high volume of MVPA engaged in during the session (39%/ 21-minutes) was very promising and indicated that if the Active Play were offered to children in most school days then it would make a substantial improvement to their MVPA levels, particularly if the sessions lasted the full hour as intended.

There was no improvement in total FMS score and percentile in the intervention group compared to the control group. However, total FMS score improved from 88 (27th percentile) at baseline to 91 (31st percentile) at follow-up for the intervention group, which was a statistically significant change. It is recommended that children should score 100 (or 50th percentile) to be classed as 'average'[13] and at baseline, 57% of children had FMS that was below average, which highlights that children need more intervention to improve their FMS further. Nonetheless, as in the previous evaluation, the impact on FMS was promising, particularly given the low baseline levels of FMS.

The combination of MVPA and FMS has been suggested to improve children's inhibition and maths fluency; however, there was no improvement in the intervention group compared to the control.

5 Next Steps and Recommendations

Although changes in the outcomes were not substantial, the high levels of MVPA during the Active Play sessions provide a promising foundation. If the programme were delivered twice or three times per week, it is anticipated that it may have an increased effect on school day physical activity, FMS and possibly also on inhibition and maths fluency.

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Appendix 2

Active Play and Play Champs Year 2
Final Report – October 2018

FMR Research

Final Report
October 2018

Active Play & Play Champs – Year 2

Prepared for:
Inspiring Scotland, Riverside House, 502 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh EH11 3AF

Contract No: 3577

FMRRESEARCH

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At a glance…

The Year 2 (2017/18) programmes:

40 Glasgow primary schools
400 Active Play sessions
320 Play Champs sessions
3 play charities
1,024 P3/4s AP participants
388 P5/6 Play Champs
10,035 hrs of AP
3,010 hrs of PC

The impacts:

100% enjoyed Active Play
↑ **22%** children identifying as **most** active
↓ **20%** children identifying as **least** active
78% teachers **plan to continue AP**
63% teachers confident throughout
28% teachers' confidence improved
35% use AP learning/games in PE
28% promoting AP to other teachers

Active Play	**Play Champs**
% of schools noted the following impacts of Active Play/Play Champs unprompted (not % children):	
100% improvement in fundamental movement skills **100%** improved fitness/stamina levels **98%** trying new skills **93%** improving existing skills **90%** more confident/motivated **90%** improved relationships with other children/making new friends **85%** improved co-operation/sharing **78%** developing imaginative, more creative play **75%** trying new games at home/play time **70%** improved participation levels **60%** more engaged/focussed in class **55%** interested/attending new clubs **53%** improved relationship between class and teacher **53%** improved communications **45%** improved behaviour **40%** children with additional needs or socially isolated taking part	**98%** improved confidence **98%** understand what a good/bad PC is **90%** are leading games solo **83%** delivering play sessions in PE, playground, other AP times or outside school **78%** motivated and keen to lead **68%** great ideas/creativity **68%** improved peer relationships **68%** better team working **63%** understand importance and benefits of AP **60%** more supportive and patient **58%** teachers noted improvement **53%** better concentration, focus and engagement in the classroom **53%** sharing learning with friends, family, classmates and teachers **53%** improved behaviour

Executive summary

Background

This report provides an analysis of Year 2 data on the Active Play and Play Champs programmes operating in Glasgow City Council primary schools, funded by Pupil Equity Fund resources. Year 2 took place in the 2017/18 academic year and involved 40 schools across Glasgow. Each play charity recorded data at the beginning, midpoint and end of each programme. This report takes an overview of changes noted in schools, rather than for each individual child. The University of Strathclyde has conducted research on the physical impacts of the programmes and those findings are reported separately.

How does it work?

The Active Play and Play Champs programmes are fun, inclusive and active sessions. Active Play runs with a P3 or 4 class and teacher for 10 weeks, supported by a play charity (FARE, Jeely Piece Club or PEEK). Each session takes one hour, with a structured first half led by the play charity/teacher and free play in the second half hour. Play Champs involves 10 P5 or 6 children and a Support for Learning Worker over 8 weeks. Play Champs trains the children to promote greater engagement in active play to other children during play time and lunch breaks.

The programmes aim to improve children's physical activity and physical literacy levels, which improve their physical and mental health, develop their team work and social skills plus improve focus and behaviour in class. Ultimately, this aims to help raise attainment. The programmes are intended to leave a sustainable legacy which children, staff and schools can build upon.

Key findings - Active Play

Self-perceptions of activity levels

When children were asked at the start and end of the programme to identify which of three characters, with different activity levels, they most identified with, there was a positive shift. 22% more children at the end of the programme (50%) identified as 'most active' than at the start (28%); whilst 20% fewer children (15%) saw themselves as 'least active' at the end than at the beginning (35%). This equates to an average of 8.5 children per class perceiving themselves to be least active at the start, which reduced to 3.6 per class; and 6.8 children per class at the start perceiving themselves to be most active, which increased to 12.3 per class.

Impacts

All observations relating to each school were collated and coded to help build a picture of the frequency with which impacts were noted. The evaluation tools were largely open-ended and different play charities provided varying levels of detail in their responses, so this needs to be considered when reviewing the findings. As a result, it is anticipated that direct questions about each of these impacts would have yielded higher results. It must also be noted that these impacts were observed in some children, but does not necessarily mean that all children showed all such improvements (or, indeed, that they needed to – children would have had different starting points in terms of physical fitness/literacy, confidence and social skills, etc.). However, feedback suggests that all children enjoyed the programmes and benefitted in some way, with children playing better together and resolving any issues without adult intervention. For some children, such as those with additional support needs or who were low in confidence, the impacts have been significant.

'Core' impacts were evident (% of schools where this was noted, not % of all children):

- 100% improved fitness/stamina;
- 100% improved fundamental movement skills;
- 55% interest/attendance at new clubs; and

- 75% trying new games at break time, in the community or at home.

There were also significant impacts in terms of 'softer' outcomes:
- 90% improved confidence/motivation;
- 90% improved relationships/making new friends;
- 85% improved team working;
- 78% imaginative or more creative play; and
- 70% greater participation levels.

Clear links to educational attainment were also highlighted:
- 60% more engaged/having improved focus in class;
- 53% improved relationships between class and teacher;
- 53% improved communications;
- 45% improved behaviour, usually relating to an individual child with negative behaviours exhibited at the start; and
- 40% children with additional support needs or who are socially isolated taking part.

Teacher confidence in delivery
In two out of three schools (63%), teachers were perceived to be confident in delivering Active Play from the outset. Whilst a quarter (25%) lacked confidence at the start, 28% gained confidence over the course of the programme. However, 13% still lacked confidence at the end of the programme and 15% required extra support from play workers. Nearly half of schools (45%) showed improved knowledge of games and the ability to develop new games and ideas and 10% had already shared knowledge with other teachers.

Embedding Active Play
Three-quarters of Year 2 class teachers (78%) planned to continue Active Play with the class and 35% were already using games/learning from Active Play in PE. In 28% of schools, play charities noted that Active Play was being promoted or rolled out to other teachers/classes. The play charities explored what additional support schools needed to embed Active Play beyond the 10 week programme. The Active Play website was cited for 53% of schools and nearly half of schools (48%) were looking at continued support from the play charities with events and/or on completion of the scheduled programme. This suggests the schools valued their input, but may also suggest that active support is required for longer than 10 weeks.

Key findings - Play Champs

A wide range of positive impacts were noted from Play Champs observations, including the following (again, % relate to number of schools where this was cited, not % of children):
- 98% improved confidence;
- 90% leading/delivering games themselves;
- 83% delivering play sessions to others in school or in the community;
- 78% motivated to learn and keen to lead games;
- 68% improved relationships between children;
- 68% working better as a team;
- 60% more supportive and patient with each other;
- 53% sharing learning with friends, family, classmates and teachers;
- 53% better concentration, focus and engagement in the classroom; and
- 53% improved behaviour.

To conclude, the Active Play and Play Champs programmes show real merit in building children's physical fitness/literacy, confidence and self-esteem, wellbeing, social, creative and critical thinking skills, peer/teacher relationships and behaviour (minimising negative behaviours and promoting positive ones). Feedback suggests these translate into positive outcomes in the classroom, improving focus, minimising disruptive behaviour and improving academic performance. The next steps in supporting schools to embed Active Play and Play Champs to build on progress to date and benefit more children are critical.

Introduction

This report

This report outlines the observations, views and other data for the Active Play and Play Champs programmes in Year 2 of operation in Glasgow City Council primary schools, driven by Inspiring Scotland's Thrive Outdoors work stream. This provides part of the picture, with additional research being conducted by the University of Strathclyde to measure the physical impacts.

The aims of Active Play and Play Champs

Active Play and Play Champs programmes aim to help raise attainment by improving children's physical activity, which are often not meeting recommended levels, and physical literacy levels, contributing to Curriculum for Excellence outcomes in health and wellbeing. Active Play and Play Champs were developed:

- To create opportunities for children to develop fundamental movement skills (running, jumping, throwing, catching, skipping, hopping, etc., which all improve co-ordination and balance) at the right time in their physical development. This enables them to participate better in games and sports, so they enjoy it and want to do more of it – creating a virtuous circle of physical literacy and higher activity levels which impact on their current and future health outcomes.

- Because the research shows that higher physical activity levels result in better physical and mental health and wellbeing in childhood, and establish healthier activity patterns in later life.

- As physical activity before and during school is suggested to improve concentration levels and behaviour in class, which can lead to improved attainment.

Active Play and Play Champs sessions aim to be FIA (Fun, Inclusive and Active) and previous research has found them to have a number of benefits. These include the obvious **physical** benefits of improved fitness (heart, lung, muscle and bone health), weight control (more calories are used) and fundamental movement skills/physical literacy, but also social, emotional and cognitive benefits. For example, children build **social** skills (particularly helpful for those with additional support needs) when working as a team, meeting new people and making new friends, which benefits social integration beyond the play sessions. Playing and being physically active outdoors in the fresh air (whatever the weather, with the right clothing) is known to have positive impacts on **mental and emotional** health, increasing happiness levels, reducing anxiety and depression and being an outlet for stress or anger. The opportunity to expend energy also helps children settle and focus better on return to class. Seeing an improvement in physical skills and/or fitness and achieving new things benefits children's self-esteem and confidence levels. Active Play requires children to think creatively, solve problems, assess risk and make decisions – which improves **cognitive development**. Ultimately, all of these impact positively on **academic performance** and **contribute to national outcomes**.

Active Play and Play Champs aim to leave a sustainable legacy – equipping the children, and schools with the understanding, skills and enthusiasm to continue to be more active during play times in school, in PE, at home and in the wider community.

The evolution of Active Play

Inspiring Scotland has been developing the Active Play concept for a number of years, and developed the Active Play programme with local play charities in Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire and Inverclyde. The Active Play programme was initially run over 45 weeks in pilot schools, and was the subject of a year-long evaluation[1], before being extended to a larger number of Glasgow City Council schools in 2016/17. The scale of deprivation in Glasgow is significant, and its impact on health, attainment and many other lifelong outcomes are long-recognised. Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) presented the opportunity for schools to invest in Active Play more widely in the city.

The programme was condensed to 10 weeks' Active Play support from play charities when rolled out across the city, targeting more deprived communities. Inspiring Scotland recruited PEEK (Possibilities for Each and Every Kid), Jeely Piece Club and FARE (Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse) to deliver the programmes in Glasgow. All three charities are play specialists who run their own outdoor and street play sessions across Glasgow and Agile CIC provides training and development support.

In its current iteration, Active Play involves a class of Primary 3 or 4 children - who are at the critical age/stage to develop fundamental movement skills (FMS) - and their class teacher. Each Active Play session lasts for an hour. The first half is led by the play charity staff, working on different fundamental movement skills across the 10 week programme. Each session aims to be FIA (fun, inclusive and active) so if any child slows down or disengages, the activities are changed in order for everyone to continue to participate. The second half of the session encourages free play, although the children often continue or build on the games from the first half. Parents are also invited to attend the final session to see what the children have been doing and some have gone on to be involved in active play sessions after school, for example.

Class teachers are involved throughout and encouraged to take a greater role as the programme progresses: the balance shifts from play charity staff delivering the session to the teacher taking the lead by the end of the programme. Some teachers are more confident doing this than others, often depending on their own fitness levels and interest/familiarity with physical activity and physical literacy. The essence of the programme is play, so this creative, fun aspect can also be challenging for teachers, who learn new games and ways in which to build on these alongside the children. The opportunity for teachers and children to see each other in a different setting and to play together also helps build insight and understanding, strengthening relationships which can then translate into the classroom.

An 8 week Play Champs programme was introduced alongside Active Play, to promote greater engagement in active play during play time/lunch breaks. Play Champs involves approximately 10 Primary 5 or 6 children plus Support for Learning Workers (SfLWs). Children learn how to assess and adapt their space, to deliver games and ensure they are FIA. The programme builds confidence: Play Champs are able to share their skills and lead games in the playground, during PE, at home or in other community activities they attend; in addition to building the physical activity/literacy rates of both the Play Champs and the children with whom they play. Play Champs builds on Mini Play Rangers[2] programmes which were developed in Dumfries, Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire, funded by go2play.

[1] By Arrivo Consulting and the University of Strathclyde: https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Active-Play-final-Evaluation-2016-FINAL-Branded-cover.pdf, last accessed 3/10/18

[2] https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Play-Champions-Toolkit-2016-web.pdf, last accessed 3/10/18

Year 2 participants

Before looking at the findings, it is important to consider the scope and scale of activity. 40 schools took part in Year 2, the 2017/18 academic year: 14 in Cohort 4 (August to Christmas), 14 in Cohort 5 (January to Easter) and 12 in Cohort 6 (Easter to June). The schools and play charities for each cohort are listed in the table below.

Year 2 schools by cohort and charity

	Play Charity	School
Cohort 4 August 2017	FARE	Sandwood
	FARE	St Blane's
	FARE	St George's
	Jeely	Blackfriars
	Jeely	Cardonald
	Jeely	Cuthbertson
	Jeely	St Brigid's
	Jeely	St Marnock's
	PEEK	Cadder
	PEEK	Caldercuilt
	PEEK	Chirnsyde
	PEEK	Parkview
	PEEK	St Joseph's
	PEEK	St Mary's
Cohort 5 January 2018	FARE	Lourdes
	FARE	Mosspark
	FARE	St Charles
	FARE	St Francis of Assisi
	FARE	Thornwood
	Jeely	Kings Park
	Jeely	Merrylee
	Jeely	Our Lady of the Rosary
	Jeely	St Mirin's
	Jeely	Tinto
	PEEK	Blairdardie
	PEEK	Garnetbank
	PEEK	St Clare's
	PEEK	St Ninian's
Cohort 6 April 2018	FARE	Pollokshields
	FARE	St Angela's
	FARE	St Bernard's
	FARE	St Saviour's
	Jeely	Castleton
	Jeely	Highpark
	Jeely	John Paul II
	Jeely	St Bartholomew's
	PEEK	Mount Florida
	PEEK	St Catherine's
	PEEK	St Constantine's
	PEEK	St Cuthbert's

Each play charity records evaluation data in several ways, which are completed on Google Forms:

- Class activity levels at the start and end of the programme. Children are asked to choose which of three fictional children they are most like (inactive, moderately active and very active) and the number of days they do some kind of physical activity.
- Head teacher feedback at the midpoint, to gain their opinions on the impacts of the programme and to initiate thinking around how Active Play could be embedded in each school.

- Session observation at weeks 3, 6 and 10 (cohorts 4 and 5) and weeks 5 and 10 for cohort 6 (this changed to reflect the visibility of impacts and enable clearer articulation of these, in response to feedback from play charities). These record changes in the children, staff and future plans/support needs.
- The number of children who have participated each week.

The number of participants in Active Play and Play Champs each week are shown below. Numbers change for a variety of reasons, many of which don't relate to the programme, so these are noted for information rather than to be seen as a reflection of the children's engagement with the programme. Comments made by the three play charities, and common sense, suggest numbers have fluctuated because of pupil illness, diary clashes with other things children are involved in and pupils occasionally being excluded from AP or PC as a disciplinary measure by the school.

Active Play numbers

Total number of children participating in Active Play during week…	Total			Cohort 4 (8/17)			Cohort 5 (1/18)			Cohort 6 (4/18)		
	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum
1	25.4	40	1014	25.4	14	355	24.9	14	348	25.9	12	311
2	25.2	40	1008	25.7	14	360	24.6	14	344	25.3	12	304
3	25.6	40	1024	24.8	14	347	25.6	14	359	26.5	12	318
4	25.3	40	1012	25.0	14	350	26.1	14	365	24.8	12	297
5	25.5	40	1019	25.4	14	356	25.4	14	355	25.7	12	308
6	25.2	40	1007	25.5	14	357	24.6	14	345	25.4	12	305
7	25.0	40	998	25.4	14	355	24.7	14	346	24.7	12	297
8	24.7	40	988	24.9	14	349	24.6	14	345	24.5	12	294
9	24.8	40	993	25.4	14	356	24.4	14	342	24.6	12	295
10	24.3	40	972	25.8	14	361	24.4	14	341	22.5	12	270

Play Champs numbers

Total number of children participating in Play Champs during week…	Total			Cohort 4 (8/17)			Cohort 5 (1/18)			Cohort 6 (4/18)		
	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum
1	9.4	40	377	9.5	14	133	9.4	14	131	9.4	12	113
2	9.3	40	370	9.4	14	131	9.2	14	129	9.2	12	110
3	9.4	40	377	9.4	14	131	9.3	14	130	9.7	12	116
4	9.7	40	388	9.3	14	130	9.9	14	138	10.0	12	120
5	9.4	40	375	9.1	14	128	9.5	14	133	9.5	12	114
6	9.5	40	379	9.1	14	128	9.6	14	134	9.8	12	117
7	9.3	40	371	9.1	14	128	8.8	14	123	10.0	12	120
8	9.3	40	373	9.4	14	131	8.7	14	122	10.0	12	120

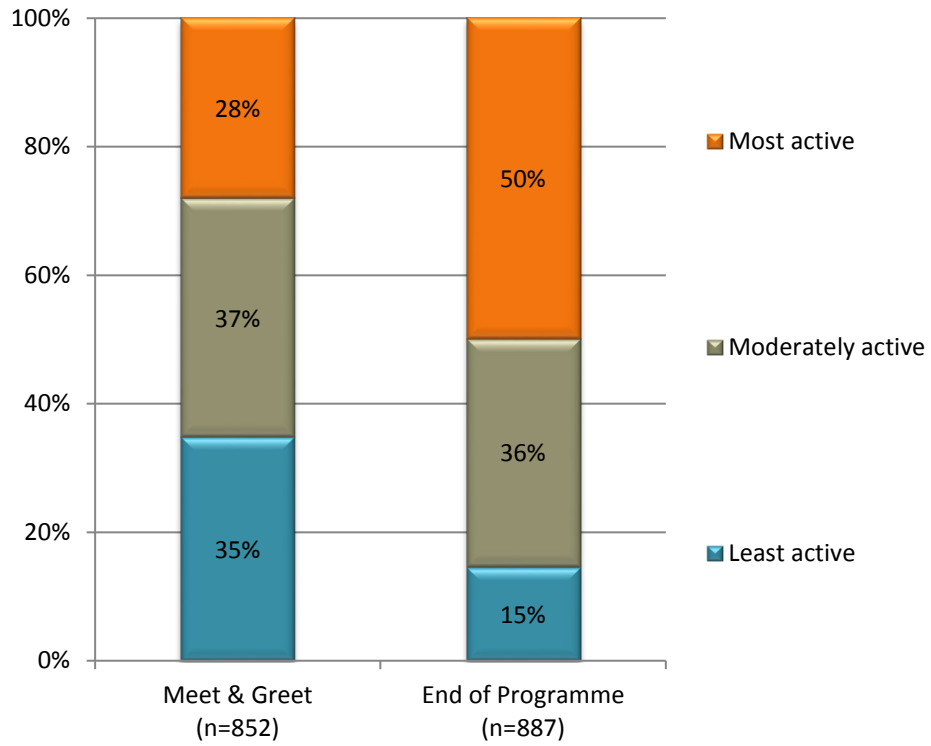
Key findings

Active Play

Self-perceived Activity Levels

At the beginning (Meet & Greet) and end (End of Programme) of each Active Play programme, children were asked to select which character they felt they were most like, from three pictures representing different activity levels (least active, moderately active and most active). In all three cohorts there was a positive shift by the end of the programme, with fewer children identifying with the least active characters and more identifying with the most active characters. The figure below illustrates the proportion of children identifying with each activity level at each stage.

Percentage of children identifying in each group, Year 2

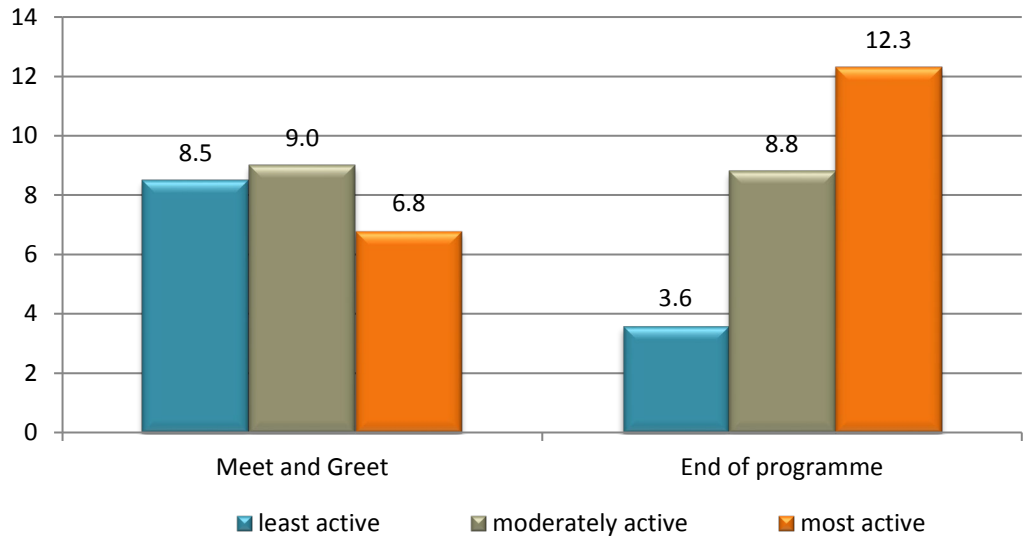


It can be challenging to find an accurate way to measure children's perceptions of themselves. For example, children's confidence levels may impact on their self-assessment (over or under-estimating activity levels) and their perceptions of activity levels may shift as they become more active (so what they would score their starting point at the end may be different to how they actually scored it at the Meet & Greet). Play charity feedback suggests that some children also found it difficult not to focus on the PC/playing computer games element of the least active images, and others were tempted to copy their friends' responses! Their actual activity/fitness levels may also vary substantially from perceptions, but the additional work being conducted by the University of Strathclyde around fitness measurement will illuminate this further.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to match up the change in perceptions for each individual child as only the number[3] of children in each category was recorded. Instead, arithmetic means were calculated to gain a sense of movement in perceptions. The data shows:

- An average of 8.5 children per class identified themselves as least active at the beginning and this reduced to 3.6 (-4.9) by the end of the programme.
- In contrast, an average of 6.8 children per class identified themselves as most active at the start of the programme, and this increased to 12.3 (+5.5) by the end of the 10 weeks.

Mean number of children least/moderately/most active at Meet & Greet and End of Programme, Year 2



"The children are active, lasting longer without stopping for a rest and walking when they should be running. They can now run for the length of a full game."

"The children are running faster and jumping more and have been running for longer periods of time during their daily mile. The teacher said they would give up and walk before Active Play but are more keen to run for longer since being involved."

"The children have been participating in a team game that allows us to judge progress of the children's ability to catch and throw the ball as well as timing the speed at which they can run round a square that has been set out. The children's results were almost double in week 8 compared to that of week 2."

The table below shows there were quite different perceptions within the three cohorts, both at the start and end of the programme. This could be coincidental, but it may be helpful to compare scores to past and/or future cohorts, or to look at individual school scores more closely, to see if there are any emerging patterns. For example, this may be due to variations in teachers' knowledge, perceptions and/or engagement around physical activity/ literacy with children during school; or any other interventions which have taken place. For example, some schools have had significant Physical Education Lead Officer (PELO) input. The figure below illustrates the total Year 2 mean scores to illustrate the positive shift in perceptions overall.

[3] Please note: the number of children responding varied between Meet and Greet and End of Programme as there were some missing data at both stages. More children responded at the End of Programme.

Number of children least/moderately/most active at Meet & Greet and End of Programme, by cohort

	Total			Cohort 4 (8/17)			Cohort 5 (1/18)			Cohort 6 (4/18)		
	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum	Mean	No.	Sum
Meet and Greet - least active	8.5	35	297	9.2	9	83	8.3	14	116	8.2	12	98
Meet and Greet - moderately active	9.0	35	316	6.7	9	60	10.2	14	143	9.4	12	113
Meet and Greet - most active	6.8	35	239	9.2	9	83	6.1	14	86	5.8	12	70
End of prog - least active	3.6	36	130	2.8	12	34	3.5	13	45	4.6	11	51
End of prog - moderately active	8.8	36	315	5.1	12	61	10.5	13	136	10.7	11	118
End of prog - most active	12.3	36	442	17.6	12	211	10.0	13	130	9.2	11	101

Active Play Impacts

The following data have been compiled by taking an overview of each school via:

1. Active Play observations (at weeks 3, 6 and 10 for cohorts 4 and 5; weeks 5 and 10 for cohort 6);
2. comments made in class activity responses (Meet and Greet and End of Programme); and
3. midpoint semi-structured interviews with school staff.

The following chart and tables reflect whether any of the above sources have cited each issue. For example, 100% (all schools) have noted improved fitness/stamina levels. This does not mean that every child in every school has improved fitness/stamina but that improved fitness/stamina levels were mentioned at least once, and often repeatedly. Play charities did sometimes comment on *"everyone"* being fitter but it is recognised that improvements in all children may be unlikely as some would have started with high fitness level. This will be revealed by the University of Strathclyde data. It is also important to note that these comments were made in free text format so reflect the main points to be recalled and noted by the play charities. If asked specifically about each of these impacts, it is likely that impacts would be more prevalent.

The 'core' impacts to meet the outcomes set for Active Play are evident:

- improved fitness/stamina (100% of schools);
- improved fundamental movement skills (100%);
- interest in attending new clubs (55%); or
- trying new games at break time/home (75%).

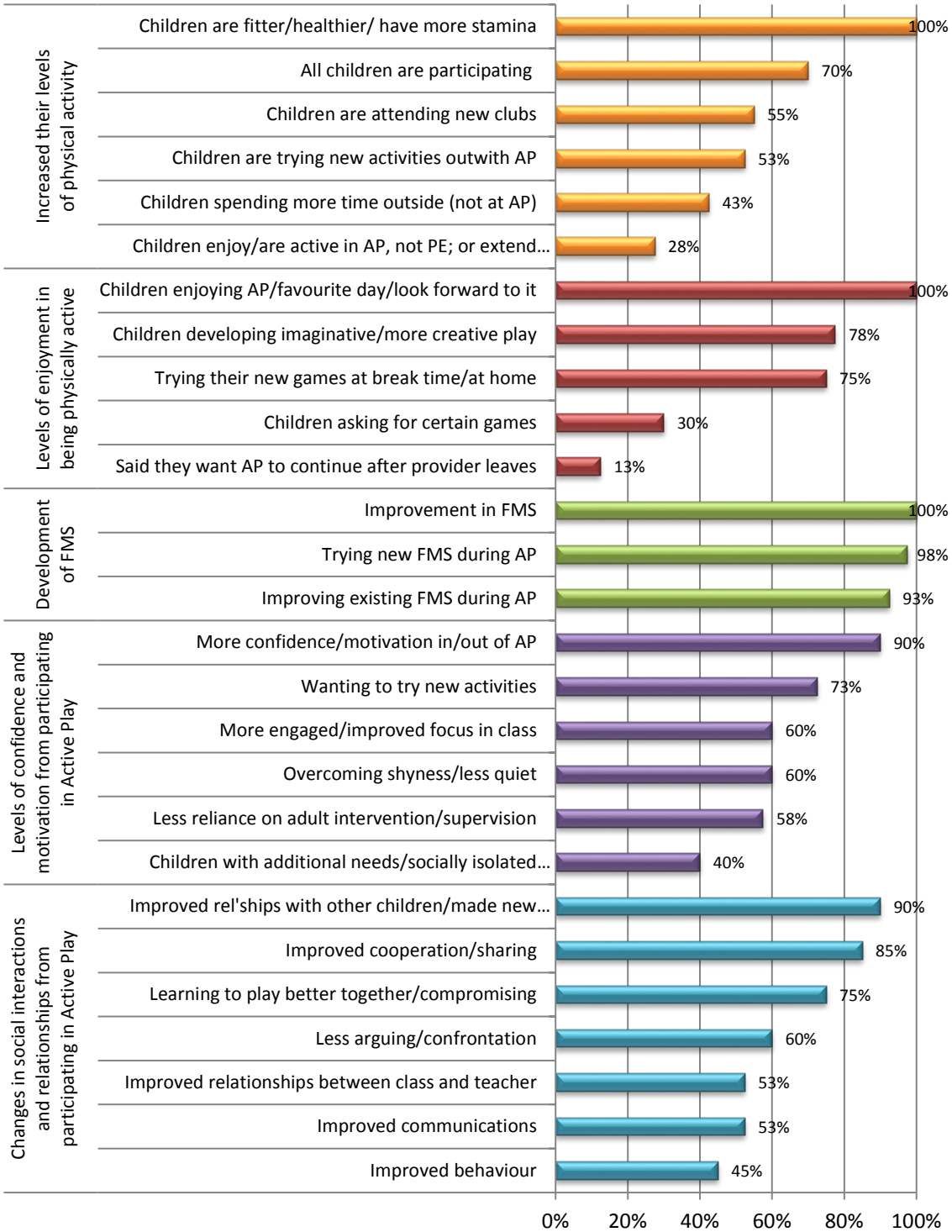
However, there are also significant impacts noted in terms of 'softer' outcomes such as:

- improved confidence/motivation (90% of schools);
- greater participation levels (70%);
- imaginative/more creative play (78%);
- improved relationships/making new friends (90%); and
- team working (85%), for example.

…and impacts of particular relevance to educational attainment:

- children are more engaged/have improved focus in class (60% of schools);
- children with additional needs or socially isolated are taking part (40%);
- improved relationships between class and teacher (53%);
- improved communications (53%); and
- improved behaviour, usually relating to an individual child with negative behaviours exhibited at the start (45%).

Articulated Active Play Impacts per school – all sources, Year 2



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The table below provides a list of frequencies with which issues appear in collated school responses. Each issue is counted once, regardless of the number of times it is mentioned, to avoid duplication or bias (as the amount of detail provided by play charities varied) and gain a sense of prevalence within the sample. Please note that these reflect what has been articulated, but the scores may well have been higher if asked explicitly about each of these issues.

Articulated Active Play Impacts per school, by cohort – all sources, Year 2

	Cohort							
	Total		Cohort 4 (8/17)		Cohort 5 (1/18)		Cohort 6 (4/18)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Children enjoying AP/favourite day/look forward to it	40	100%	14	100%	14	100%	12	100%
Improvement in fundamental movement skills	40	100%	14	100%	14	100%	12	100%
Children are fitter/healthier/ have more stamina	40	100%	14	100%	14	100%	12	100%
Trying new skills during AP	39	98%	13	93%	14	100%	12	100%
Improving existing skills during AP	37	93%	14	100%	11	79%	12	100%
More confidence/motivation in/out of AP	36	90%	13	93%	13	93%	10	83%
Improved relationships with other children/made new friends	36	90%	14	100%	10	71%	12	100%
Improved cooperation/sharing	34	85%	12	86%	11	79%	11	92%
Children developing imaginative/more creative play	31	78%	10	71%	11	79%	10	83%
Trying their new games at break time/at home	30	75%	12	86%	10	71%	8	67%
Learning to play better together/compromising	30	75%	8	57%	11	79%	11	92%
Wanting to try new activities	29	73%	8	57%	11	79%	10	83%
All children are participating	28	70%	7	50%	12	86%	9	75%
Overcoming shyness/less quiet	24	60%	8	57%	8	57%	8	67%
More engaged/improved focus in class	24	60%	8	57%	9	64%	7	58%
Less arguing/confrontation	24	60%	8	57%	11	79%	5	42%
Less reliance on adult intervention/supervision	23	58%	8	57%	9	64%	6	50%
Attending new clubs	22	55%	9	64%	9	64%	4	33%
Trying new activities outwith AP	21	53%	6	43%	7	50%	8	67%
Improved communications	21	53%	8	57%	6	43%	7	58%
Improved relationships between class and teacher	21	53%	7	50%	8	57%	6	50%
Improved behaviour	18	45%	5	36%	5	36%	8	67%
Wanting to spend/spending more time outside	17	43%	2	14%	11	79%	4	33%
Children with additional needs or socially isolated taking part	16	40%	5	36%	5	36%	6	50%
Children asking for certain games	12	30%	7	50%	4	29%	1	8%
Children enjoy/are active in AP where not in PE or extend AP to PE	11	28%	3	21%	6	43%	2	17%
Challenges of children with additional needs	8	20%	1	7%	2	14%	5	42%
At start, children bicker/don't play well	7	18%	2	14%	0	0%	5	42%
Want AP to continue after provider leaves	5	13%	0	0%	3	21%	2	17%
At start, children play computer/Xbox/are inactive	4	10%	2	14%	2	14%	0	0%
Total	40	100%	14	100%	14	100%	12	100%

Whilst these factors have been noted in each school setting and do not apply to every single child, it was encouraging to see many examples of individual progress. Children who were less confident, physically and socially, at the start of the Active Play programme were seen to grow and develop over the course of the ten weeks, making new friendships and displaying more positive behaviours. Progress was often observed by play charity staff and also commented upon by school personnel.

> *"There [are] a few new children who do not speak English and the HT said it has been quite difficult to get them engaging in class. However when they are out in Active Play she said that she was so surprised to see them fully engaged in the sessions and having smiles on their faces was a new thing. The children have picked up the games really quickly and this has helped them make friends in the class…The HT could not*

have been more positive about the importance and impact that Active Play has had for the children and teacher and mentioned the children are settled in class and can focus more."

"Staff found that children who shy away from physical activity at school found it easier to take part in Active Play sessions."

At the start of the programme, 20% of schools made some comment about the challenges for children with additional support needs and 18% commented that the class did not play well together (bickering, 'telling' on each other and requiring adult intervention to resolve issues). Significant progress was noted over the course of the Active Play programme on both issues.

"…one of the young people who is in a wheelchair has become so much more independent and through Active Play she is more willing to challenge herself and do things on her own. The same young person has been trying lots of new activities."

"A is often in fights and arguments during play time and lunchtime. He finds it very difficult to manage his anger and frustration, often resulting in him displaying aggression. This has been a big problem and also affects his ability to build relationships with children in the class. This has not been an issue during Active Play. He has been trying new things and has been managing his anger very well, talking about issues and resolving them himself which has been amazing."

"The HT also was surprised to see two of the boys in the class joining in as she said previously they struggled to play. The children have never had any issues [with play] since AP."

Play charities noted much more easy-going, fair play where children resolved any issues which arose themselves.

"The [head] teacher had noticed that since the children started Active Play she has had less visits from the children in that class regarding bad behaviour... The children have been playing more games in the playground and have learned to organise themselves into teams without any challenges requiring adult intervention."

"Kids have been building on social skills, strengthening friendships and developing new ones. Children are playing with each other who didn't before, which is great. There is a new boy in the class who has been very overwhelmed and struggled to make friends, especially at play time. The play sessions have created an opportunity for him to make new friendships and put himself out there."

"O has a lot of friends within the class and is very popular with his peer group. He is often the leader within any games organised during free play but within this he really struggles with anyone else trying to make changes or suggestions within the group, often resulting in him becoming very angry and sometimes even [excluding] people. He likes to lead but isn't very good at co-operating or taking other people's opinions into consideration. Over the weeks he has become more willing to listen to others and take into consideration how others may feel about his decisions. He is much calmer during sessions as well and is taking time to calm down when someone or something upsets him."

"H struggles socially if he doesn't get his own way. He loves to play but likes to make all the decisions which doesn't go down well with many from the class. This has been much better, he is realising he can't always

lead and sometimes has to listen to others. Him realising this and working on it has enabled him to play better with others in the class and build better friendships."

"In the initial week the children would argue about other teams' progress and some children would accuse the other children of cheating. We have had to constantly remind the children that winning the game is not what's important and we have changed specific games over the weeks to allow the children to work in teams more so that they can get used to team work and positive play as opposed to arguing with each other."

Looking at the commentary/observations around each school individually, it was clear to see progress being made in every setting over the course of the 10 week programme. This included children taking up more out of school activities:

"The teacher said they have seen a difference in activity levels and more people in the class are joining the after school sports club."

"Many of the class have also started attending PEEK's breakfast clubs in the mornings and numbers from the Active Play class attending this are growing each week."

"The children in the class have been trying a new play session after school and seem to be really enjoying it. Some of the boys have reported attending football outwith school and some girls attend dancing."

"A lot of the children have told staff they have been attending dance clubs, football clubs."

"Some of the children have told us they now go to after school activities."

"Through the free play sessions we have a child who has been improving his tennis skills and is now wanting to start a tennis club outwith school and Active Play."

"A few of the girls in the group now attend after school dance class and are really enjoying it and will ask you to watch them, putting on shows at free play."

Teacher confidence in delivering Active Play

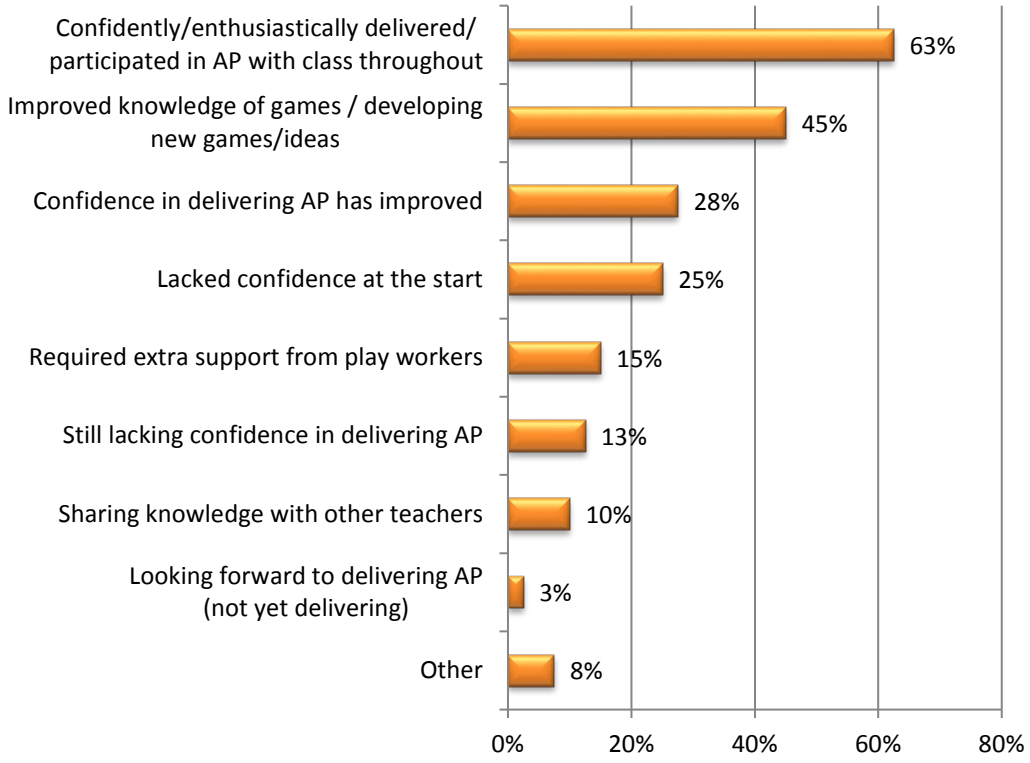
Teachers were perceived to be confident in delivering Active Play from the start in two out of three schools (63%, 25 schools), higher in cohort 5 (71%, 10; compared to 57%/58% in cohorts 4 and 6). Improved knowledge of games and developing new games and ideas were noted in nearly half of schools (45%, 18) and, whilst a quarter lacked confidence at the start (25%, 10) confidence was seen to have improved over the course of Active Play (28%, 11).

"The teacher now feels confident to take on Active Play and is going to keep Active Play running at the same time when we leave as she feels the children have increased [their] listening skills, confidence and ability to play independently and she feels the children then go on to work better after Active Play."

"Class teacher is already using the games in gym class and is looking forward to next year to continue the sessions in curriculum time. She has seen great improvements in the children and really believes in the programme. She will be looking to use the children and their ideas to embed the sessions as well."

"The class teacher … has told us she plans to continue Active Play with her class and would love to have it at a similar time to enable her to still benefit from how engaged the children are after the session. She is also wanting to pass on her learning to other teachers within the school."

Teacher confidence in delivering Active Play



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As the table below illustrates, lack of confidence to deliver Active Play was more evident in teachers from cohort 6 – 42% (5) lacked confidence at the start and 33% (3) continued to lack confidence in delivering Active Play, with only 8% (1 school) noting increased confidence in delivering Active Play. This may be coincidental or reflect an unintended shift in the way charities recorded feedback. However, it might also reflect the fact that Active Play worked with the 'early adopters' - the more proactive, enthusiastic schools/teachers who volunteered to host Active Play - in earlier cohorts and may now be engaging with those who are possibly less enthusiastic or confident in delivering this type of creative, energetic, fun outdoor play session.

"The teacher was really prepared last week for taking the lead, she had planned the full session and introduced three new games to the children that were fun, active and inclusive…The teacher was a little nervous and said even though it's her class, she is not used to delivering play so it was a learning curve for her."

"It is going to be very difficult for the class teacher to embed the programme when [we] leave. The teacher has spent a lot of the time watching from the side and not a lot of time delivering. It was evident that she wasn't invested in the programme as much as we need her to be in order to take the programme on. The class teacher saw the benefits of the programme but didn't prepare for any delivery and when she did deliver she struggled to maintain a high level of intensity throughout. [We]

will continue to support the class teacher and [the school] and urge that they embed the programme."

Have the class teachers increased their levels of confidence to deliver Active Play over the past 3-4 weeks?

	Cohort							
	Total		Cohort 4 (8/17)		Cohort 5 (1/18)		Cohort 6 (4/18)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Confidently/enthusiastically delivered/participated in AP with class throughout	25	63%	8	57%	10	71%	7	58%
Improved knowledge of games / developing new games/ideas	18	45%	7	50%	6	43%	5	42%
Confidence in delivering AP has improved	11	28%	7	50%	3	21%	1	8%
Lacked confidence at the start	10	25%	3	21%	2	14%	5	42%
Required extra support from play workers	6	15%	3	21%	2	14%	1	8%
Still lacking confidence in delivering AP	5	13%	0	0%	1	7%	4	33%
Sharing knowledge with other teachers	4	10%	3	21%	0	0%	1	8%
Looking forward to delivering AP (not yet delivering)	1	3%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	3	8%	0	0%	3	21%	0	0%
Total	40	100%	14	100%	14	100%	12	100%

Other:

- The class teacher still needs some support as there [are] so many additional needs in this class. He is very involved and takes part in the full session.
- As we got a new class half way through I have not had the chance to work with the class teacher while she delivers to the class.
- The teacher is new and temporary, she is very helpful and joins in during free play but takes a step back during the first half of the session.

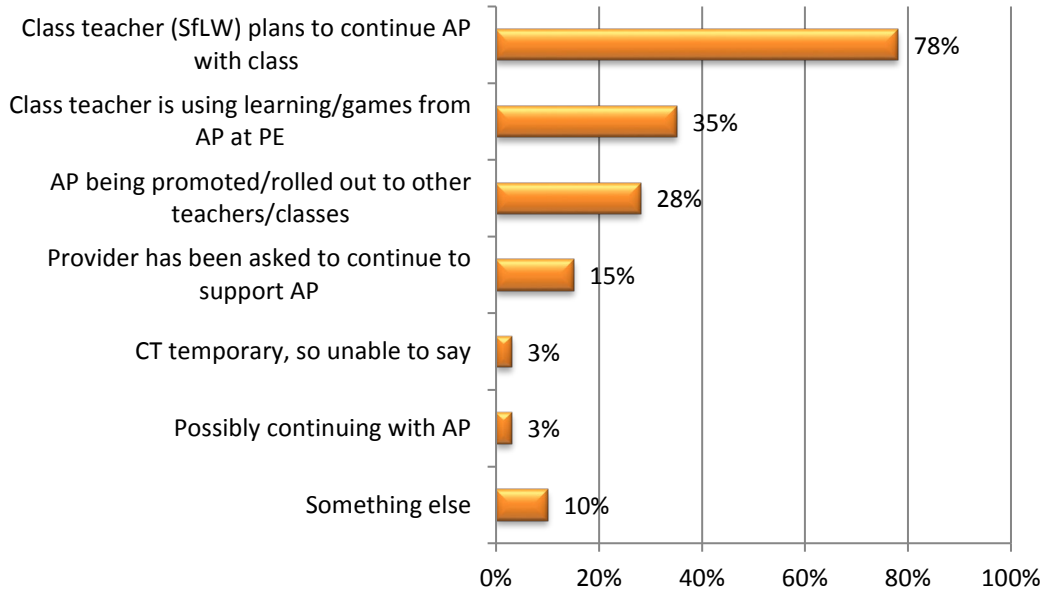
Embedding Active Play beyond the 10 week programme

The majority of Year 2 schools stated that they are looking to continue Active Play in one way or another, some in more than one context, as the figure below and quotes illustrate.

"The teacher has set up an AP after school club involving parents. The teacher is also going to use the AP model with the class on a regular basis and has already been doing this since week 5. The teacher has noticed the benefits and wants to continue to implement the programme to maintain the level of physical activity that the children are currently getting. The teacher also set up her own AP taster during the in-service day to give the other teachers an idea of how to take [the] lead and the feedback from the teacher was really positive … the HT is looking for others in the school to take on more of an active role with their class. The HT is also setting up the rota for Play Champs to work with the infants during play time and lunch time."

"The HT mentioned they will continue to provide the children with outdoor learning and play as they have seen the benefits of this so far."

Future plans for Active Play



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Please note: for 9 out of 14 schools using learning/games from Active Play at PE, this was in addition to continuing Active Play with the class.

Something else:

- Class teacher did not engage with delivering the programme
- Class teacher uncomfortable about taking lead in delivering Active Play
- Head Teacher has set up a play zone in the playground where Active Play games will be led by Play Champs. Also arranged monthly partnership play session with another school.
- Teacher has set up an Active Play after school club involving parents.

Future support to deliver Active Play

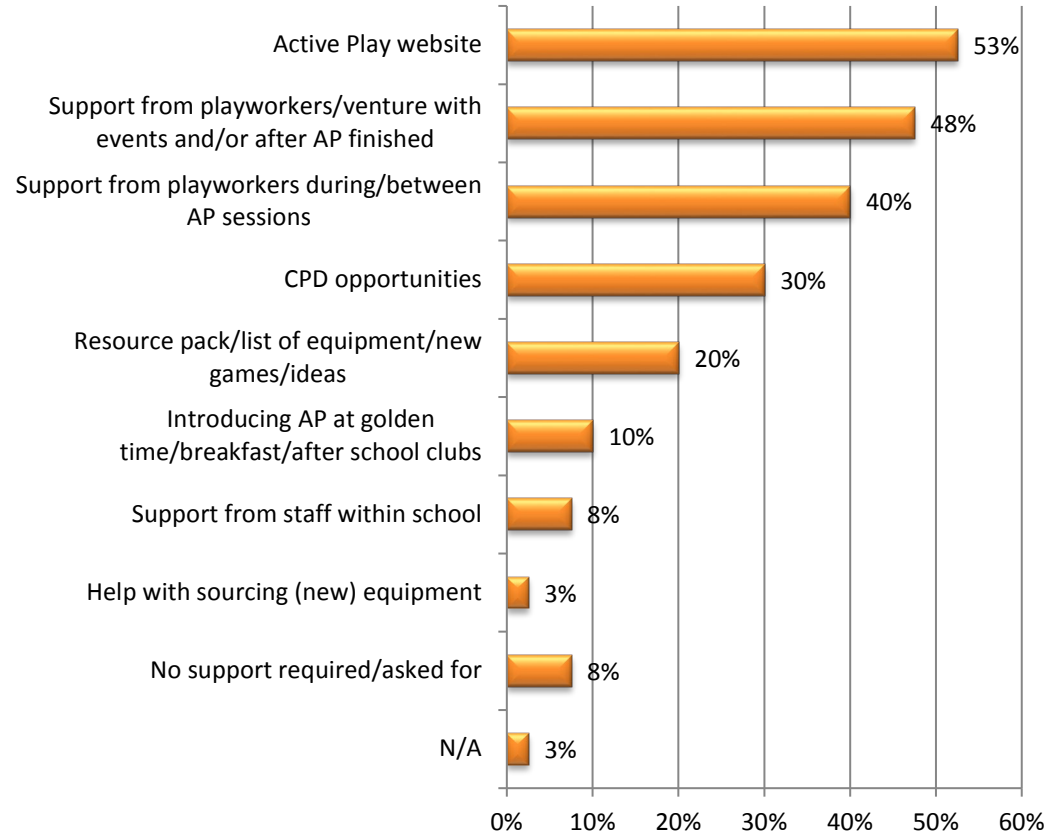
The play charities explored any additional support needs of schools to help them embed Active Play beyond the 10 week programme, alongside any information or direction that may be helpful. The Active Play website was cited for just over half of schools in Year 2 (53%, 21 schools), and nearly half of schools were looking at continued support from the play charities with events and/or on completion of the scheduled programme. This suggests that schools valued the input from charities and may wish their input for other children, staff or parents. However, it may also suggest that schools/teachers need support for more than 10 weeks. A significant proportion may not yet feel able to 'fly solo' and maintain progress or build on the Active Play programme, embedding its principles more effectively in their school. The fact that not every school intends to continue Active Play in class and only a quarter (28%) were noted to be rolling the programme out to other classes/teachers may also support this possibility.

> *"The school have said they would love play sessions to really embed play across the school and not just for the P4 class."*

> *"The teacher needs more support to encourage her and boost her confidence as she is still struggling to deliver the full session and said she is very forgetful. The CPD may help the teacher as she will get a chance to refresh her memory of the programme. A list of games and explanations would support the teacher further and also looking at the website for video demos could encourage her to try new games."*

"The HT has emailed and asked [us] to continue in the school and they would like us to work with some of the children who find it hard to play in their own time."

Additional support, information and direction to help embed Active Play



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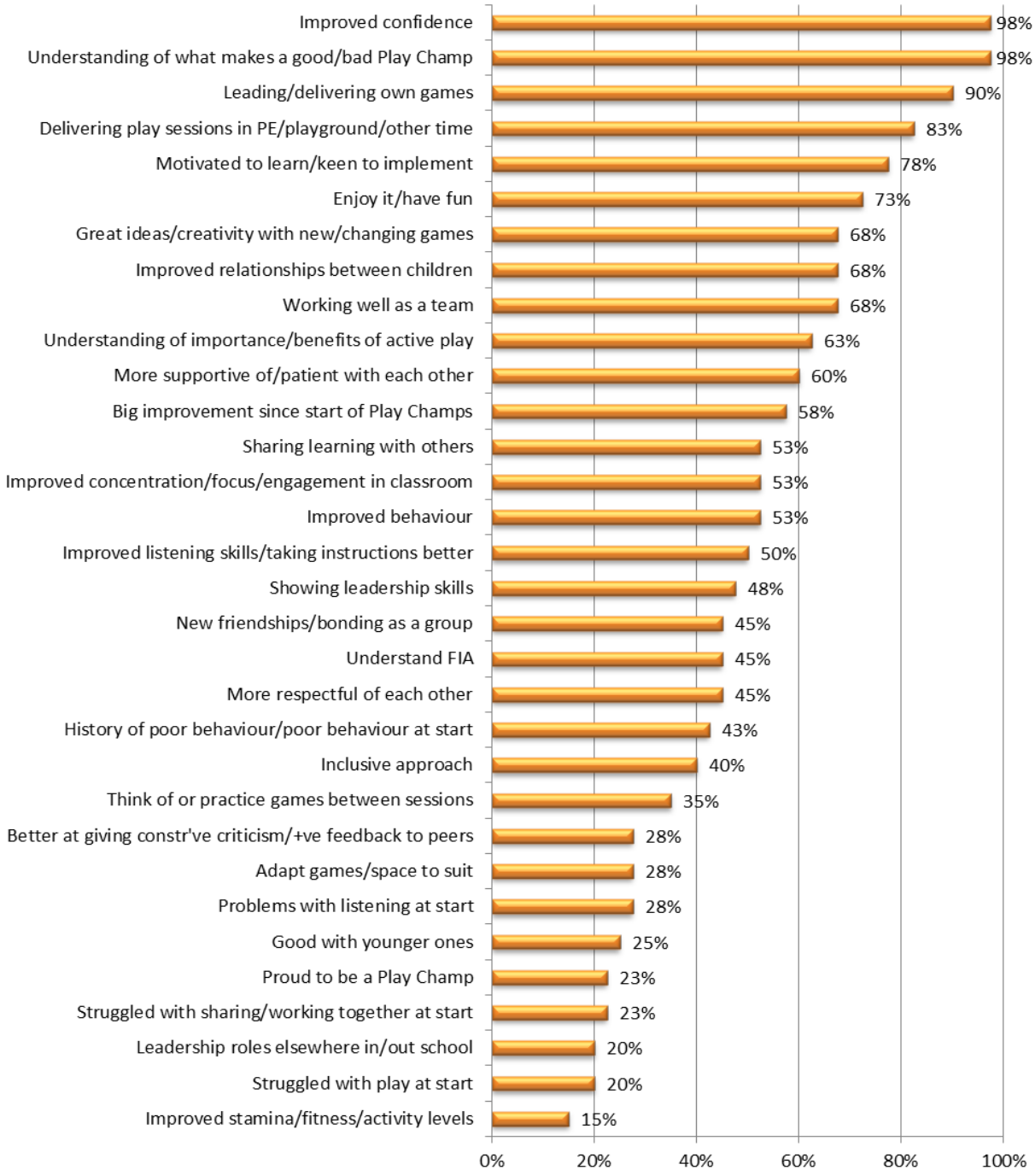
Play Champs

Play Champs observations were made at weeks 3, 6 and 8 for cohorts 4 and 5, and weeks 4 and 8 for cohort 6 (again, in response to feedback from play charities about the most appropriate time to collect these). As with Active Play, the chart below reflects whether the charity has made a point anywhere during their observations in schools, not the number of times it has been made and it does not mean that all Play Champs have exhibited this behaviour.

The top points made proactively about the children learning to be Play Champs illustrate the progress made:

- Confidence is much improved (98% of schools)
- They now have a good understanding of what makes a good/bad Play Champ (98%)
- They are leading/delivering games by themselves (90%)
- Children are delivering play sessions to others, e.g. in PE, the playground, other Active Play times and sometimes elsewhere (dance class, Streetplay, etc.) (83%)
- They are motivated to learn and keen to lead games (78%)
- The children are enjoying themselves/having fun (73%)
- There have been some great ideas for new/modified games and creativity shown (68%)
- Relationships have improved between children and their peers (68%)
- The children are working well/better as a team (68%)
- They have an improved understanding of the importance and benefits of Active Play (63%)
- The children are more supportive and patient with each other (60%)
- The charities/teachers have noted a big improvement in the children since starting Play Champs (58%)
- Children are sharing learning with friends, family, classmates and teachers (53%)
- Teachers/SfLWs have reported the children to have better concentration, focus and engagement in the classroom which they attribute to Play Champs (both after the session and before – they don't want to miss it!) (53%)
- There has been a noticeable improvement in behaviour (in individuals who had poor behaviour before and generally; at PC and elsewhere) (53%)

Play Champs observations/impacts



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The quotes below illuminate the points made. These illustrate the physical improvements made, learning achieved, enjoyment and practical implementation of skills learned, but also highlight improvements in confidence, motivation, creativity, improved focus, behaviour, and relationships. These are extremely valuable assets for play but also for many other aspects of the children's development, attainment and resilience, and can help them to achieve their potential.

> *"This group of children can all tell you how to lead a session. Five of the children in this group have additional needs so this was really good for them to be chosen as a role model. They have really shown*

improvement in their confidence and behaviour and were pleased to have been chosen."

"One boy, who has very difficult and challenging behaviour, has shown a very caring side with the younger children when he is leading his games sessions."

"E – the class teacher told staff about improvements she has [seen] within the class room. She said he has been much more focused, especially on the day he comes back from Play Champs session. He finds it easier to listen, follow instructions and has been much more focused.

J - loves to play and always has a lot of fun during the sessions but he really struggles to engage when others are leading - he often gets distracted and wanders off. [We have seen] huge improvements over the last few weeks. Since he has had the opportunity to stand up in front of his peers he has realised it is important to listen to what others are saying while leading, which has really focused him to listen and take in what others are saying so he can follow the instructions given from others.

J – has really increased his physical activity levels. In the first few weeks he would have to stop and slow down a lot from the very beginning of the session, getting really tired and out of breath. This seems to have really improved and he is running a lot more throughout the session.

The group have gotten much closer socially. The teacher said they have built stronger friendships which has resulted in kids who don't normally socialise talking more and even playing together within the playground."

"Some of the kids have also taken on a leadership role within breakfast club and have supported some of the other kids to play which has been great. They have been a great positive influence within the group."

"Play Champs have come on leaps throughout the 8 weeks. They have really come to learn what being a Play Champ is about. They are very proud to be Play Champs and have taken a lot of pride in the time they have spent learning about play and creating games for their peers and have been sharing this with the other children in the class. They are very supportive of one another during the session and often give praise to one another. One of the key things they have enjoyed is ensuring games are inclusive and they have some great ideas on how to adapt games to ensure this.

S really struggled with self-belief and confidence throughout the weeks. She is also a very shy individual who struggles in social situations. S is very keen to participate and really enjoyed the sessions and games from the beginning, but would often shy away herself during the games. After a few weeks, S was beginning to share ideas with staff and has started to give feedback to her peers on their games. With each week you could see S becoming more confident and she was beginning to speak out more in the group. Over the last few weeks she was offering ideas out in front of everyone. She also led on a game on the last week. The SfLW who supports the session has also commented on the improvements made on her confidence and her ability to socialise within the group.

L has really come a long way within the group. He struggled the most during the sessions and really wasn't able to build relationships in the beginning, often losing his temper and becoming aggressive during the

session. By the end, L has really made progress within the group starting to build stronger relationships and the other children in the group seem to understand him a lot more as a result of his behaviour calming down."

Concluding comments

This analysis helps to convey the key activities and qualitative impacts of the Active Play and Play Champs programmes in Glasgow. Whilst it would be inappropriate to make conclusions and recommendations on this part of the picture alone, it may be helpful to make some concluding comments as the research team has developed an understanding of the programmes and a sense of how Year 2 has progressed for children and school staff.

Core outcomes for Active Play and Play Champs were to increase children's physical activity levels and improve their fundamental movement skills/physical literacy. Both the Active Play and Play Champs programmes appear to have achieved this, as:

- children feel more active (22% more AP children identified as the most active character while 20% fewer identified as the least active character);
- all schools showed improvements in fitness and stamina levels;
- play charities noted improvements in the fundamental movement skills of children in all schools (children were perceived to be more capable of running, jumping, throwing, catching, etc. and had tried different sports/activities); and
- there was increased enthusiasm for physical activity, with children clearly enjoying, participating in and looking forward to their AP or PC sessions. Play Champs also 'did their homework', planning games and practising skills in preparation for their next PC session. This reinforces their enjoyment and how motivated they were to be a good Play Champ.

Children in all schools appear to have enjoyed AP/PC - even those who did not participate well in PE or the daily mile run participated well in these programmes. They also saw their fitness levels and skills improve over the course of the 10/8 weeks, which boosted their confidence and self-esteem. Children would all have had different starting points in terms of fitness, interests, extra-curricular activities, confidence, team work and social skills, so some will have made more significant improvements than others. The observations suggest that all have benefitted in some way.

Feedback suggests that physical activity/literacy levels have been further enhanced by some children taking up/planning to take up new clubs or activities after school, in addition to participating in more active play at breaks and lunchtime, or at home. Some teachers have already incorporated AP games into PE and the majority of schools appeared to be enthusiastic to take AP/PC principles forward, for example by sharing learning with other classes/teachers, and establishing more active play opportunities within and outwith the curriculum. If not already planned, it would be helpful to follow this up at regular intervals to see what activity has actually been maintained and what new activity has been established, i.e. the degree to which active play has become embedded within schools. This would also provide an opportunity to signpost schools to relevant resources which may be of assistance, to share learning/stories of other AP successes in the city, to offer further support and assistance, or just to remind schools about the programmes. Ten weeks is not long to establish new behaviours, particularly for weekly events, and it can be challenging to maintain momentum when play charities are not present to support schools and/or other issues are competing for attention, regardless of the widespread recognition of the programmes' positive impacts. Not all teachers/SfLWs were confident in their abilities to deliver Active Play, or very active participants, and others were NQTs so are likely to have moved on to another school. This also reinforces the need to maintain contact and ensure there is a plan to share Active Play practice within schools to ensure the investment in AP/PC is maximised, and not lost.

The need to 'sell' the benefits of AP/PC is stronger in some settings than others, but if improved physical activity/literacy is an insufficient hook, the knock-on impacts are considerable and should help to embed the approach across and within schools. The Active Play and Play Champs programmes show real merit in building children's confidence and

self-esteem, wellbeing, their social, creative and critical thinking skills, peer/teacher relationships and behaviour (both minimising negative behaviours and promoting positive ones). These appear to translate into positive outcomes in the classroom, improving focus, minimising disruptive behaviour and improving academic performance. There are many examples of the transformation of specific children participating in Active Play or Play Champs and this needs to be built upon quickly. For some, this has an impact on them, their classmates and teaching staff, both in the short and potentially longer terms if momentum is sustained. If so, this can have significant impacts on children achieving their potential, living happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives. The next steps in supporting schools to embed Active Play and Play Champs are critical.


FMR RESEARCH

Appendix 3.

Schools participating in the second Academic Year of Active Play for Attainment in Glasgow

Cohort 4	Venture		Cohort 5	Venture		Cohort 6	Venture
Blackfriars	Jeely		St Clare's	PEEK		St Constantine's	PEEK
Chirnsyde	PEEK		St Ninian's	PEEK		St Catherine's	PEEK
St Marrnock's	Jeely		Blairdardie	PEEK		St Bernard's	FARE
Cuthbertson	Jeely		Garnetbank	PEEK		Highpark	Jeely
St Brigids	Jeely		Thornwood	FARE		St Saviour's	Fare
Cardonald	Jeely		St Charles	FARE		St Bartholomew's	Jeely
St George's	Fare		Lourdes	FARE		John Paul II	Jeely
Sandwood	Fare		Mosspark	FARE		St Angela's	Fare
St Blanes	Fare		Our Lady of the Rosary	Jeely		Castleton	Jeely
Parkview	PEEK		King's Park	Jeely		St Cuthberts	PEEK
St Joseph's	PEEK		St Mirin's	Jeely		Pollokshields	Fare
Cadder	PEEK		Merrylee	Jeely		Mount Florida	PEEK
Caldercuilt	PEEK		Tinto	Jeely			
St Mary's	PEEK		St Francis of Assisi	FARE			
14			14			12	
40							

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