

Go2Play

Evaluation support for Go2Play's Active Play programme – Cohort 1

Blake Stevenson Report

December 2016



1. Introduction and context

Blake Stevenson was commissioned to assist Inspiring Scotland in their evaluation of Active Play, a play-based programme funded by Glasgow City Council Education through the Glasgow Improvement Challenge (Attainment funding).

Blake Stevenson has extensive experience of research and evaluation for a diverse range of organisations across Scotland, so the support offered to Inspiring Scotland has had a strong focus on drawing together insight from both qualitative and quantitative data sources. This will enable Inspiring Scotland to better understand the impact of the Active Play – Go2Play programme and inform future development.

Context

Play is an important part of children's quality of life, and is recognised as a child's right according to Article 31 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child¹. In 2013, the Scottish Government responded to this by launching its first Play Strategy². In line with the outcomes of 'Getting it Right for Every Child'³, the Strategy acknowledges the developmental opportunities of engaging in play throughout childhood. It also details the potential of play to positively influence the experiences of children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or living with disabilities.

Inspiring Scotland is dedicated to investing in charities so as to improve the lives of people across Scotland. Over the past seven years, they have worked in partnership with the Scottish Government to assist them to raise the profile of play, supporting charities who deliver and support play opportunities so as to work towards supporting better outcomes for Scotland's children and work towards the outcomes of the National Play Strategy 2013~ 2016. Specifically, the Go2Play programme has invested in 70 play charities in the last 7 years, supporting the movement towards more and better play opportunities for all.

Go2Play's recent Active Play programme was initiated in the East End of Glasgow in 2014, when a charity, PEEK (Possibilities for Each and Every Child) worked with local partners to deliver an active play outreach project. The project focused on the area around the Commonwealth Games location, delivering active community play and inviting local sports clubs to the sessions. The success and learning from this led to Scottish Government funding four location test sites of a refined Active Play model in the last financial year; working in 4 local authority areas and with 4 charities who covered 11 schools, 2 nurseries and 2 community sessions.

¹ UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. (Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>, accessed 26 October 2016)

² Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Vision, 2013, The Scottish Government. (Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/06/5675>, accessed 26 October 2016)

³ Getting It Right For Every Child, The Scottish Government. Available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>, accessed 26 October 2016)

Delivery model

From the work over the two previous years the model has once again been researched and evaluated and the refined Active Play model, brought to Glasgow through the GIC and Attainment fund, is shown in Figure 1 started its delivery over the summer of 2016.

Glasgow City Council has committed to delivering this to 118 of its 138 primary schools over a three-year period. In 3 cohorts per year (broadly each term in length), the programme is being delivered to ten schools per cohort. This review is of the work undertaken in the initial Cohort – Cohort 1, in which there were approximately 28–32 children per class. The first cohort ran August to November 2016, and it is intended that Cohort 2 (scheduled for January–March 2017) and Cohort 3 (scheduled for April–June 2017) will follow the same structure as Cohort 1.

Inspiring Scotland works with and trained up 2 charities to deliver this revised model PEEK and the Jeely Piece Club – both Glasgow play based charities. Their play workers provide the Active Play and the Play Champs sessions.

Figure 1: The Active Play Model



As shown in Figure 1, the Active Play segment of the programme involves part semi-structured games and activities, and part free play⁴. The games are led by Play Workers, with teacher and pupil participation. The sessions always take place outside, without the need for specialist equipment, and focus on:

- FIA: Fun, Inclusive and Active;
- FMS: Fundamental Movement Skills; and
- PA: Physical Activity.

Figure 1 also presents the Play Champs section of the programme; a play leadership programme that runs with a smaller group of children, who are taught about leading play in the playground with support from SfLW. The Play Champs are normally a group of 8 to 10 children from a P5 or P6 class and the children chosen by the Class Teacher are those who the teacher feel may benefit from greater

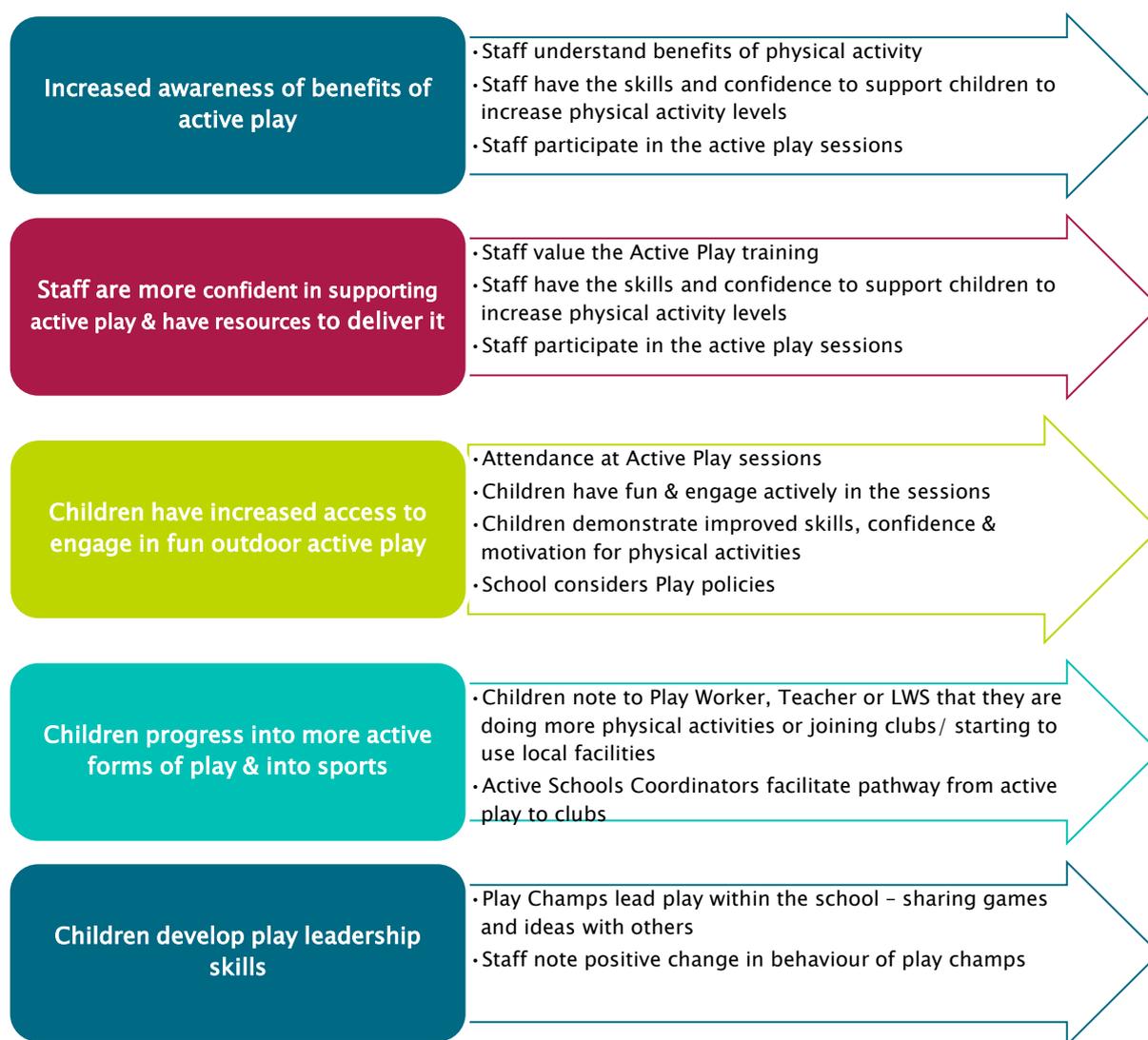
⁴ Free Play follows the Bob Hughes Recognised definition of 'freely chosen and intrinsically motivated'

responsibility, alternative ways of learning and participating to those with behavioural issues. It supports ambitions for better playground experiences for all in children in schools, and encourages greater use of Loose Parts Play, the engagement of the SfLW who oversee play times and breaks and generally raising the awareness of and enjoyment that can be delivered by playful opportunities.

Process of initial evaluation in Cohort 1

The programme logic model identifies five key outcomes of the programme, along with associated indicators (see Figure 2), which the evaluation will further explore in order to feed into the evaluation objectives.

Figure 2: Active Play programme outcomes and indicators



Previously Arrivo Consulting and The University of Strathclyde were commissioned to research and evaluate the programme, producing a report in April 2016 which reflected on the previous educational

year when this model was delivered in 4 local authority areas. That report identified progress and key learnings⁵.

The University of Strathclyde will continue to research the programme throughout its duration, producing interim reports on measures undertaken and their impact and a final Research Document towards the end of the associated PhD running alongside the Active Play program will be produced in the summer/autumn of 2019.

The team at Blake Stevenson has supported this through the analysis of baseline and end of programme evidence from the first ten schools in cohort 1, reviewing all observation forms collected from active play and play champs, and the child completed questionnaires for play champs – to build into Inspiring Scotland reporting that will:

- provide evidence of the impact for Glasgow City Council (GCC);
- inform any learning and development, leading to any changes in practices in the programme;
- feed into the development of the Active Play website and tools, currently in development

The evaluation activity draws on a number of online and paper evaluation tools, primarily:

- A- Head Teacher baseline survey;
- B- Class Teacher Focus Group Guide (Baseline);
- C- Class Teacher Focus Group Template (Baseline);
- D- Youth Champs Feedback Form;
- E- Training evaluation form not analysed for this report;
- F- Head Teacher end of programme survey;
- G- Staff End of Project Survey;
- H- Class register;
- I- Play Worker Observation Form;
- J- Class Teacher Focus Group Guide (End of Project);
- K- Class Teacher Focus Group Template (End of Project); and
- Play Champs focus group (End of Project).

⁵ Active Play: engaging children in physical activity through play, Evaluation report, 2016. Available at: <http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/media/56025/Active-Play-final-Evaluation-2016-FINAL-Branded-cover.pdf> (accessed 15 December 2016)

It is hoped that the learning from the evaluation will comprise:

Process; whether one in-service day (2 hour session) and one Head Teacher meeting prior to delivery in the schools sufficient; potential amendments to questionnaire design; improvements to the process of distributing and collating questionnaires; potential training available;

Delivery; schools space; schools' available kit; schools own interpretation (for example, policies to enable play such as wet weather policies); curriculum and/or staffing pressures

Sustained Legacy; whether a 10- week or an 8 week programme is sufficient to change culture and activity levels; what continued evaluation is required with schools; continued CPD as appropriate.

2. Delivery and impact of the overall programme

Head Teacher Baseline and End Surveys

The Head Teachers' surveys provide valuable insight into the effectiveness of the programme delivery, and its impact. Ten head teachers completed the Head Teacher baseline survey in August/September 2016, from schools across Scotland: Craigton Primary, St Francis Primary School, Dalmarnock Primary, Avenue End Primary School, Annette Street Primary, Wellshot Primary, St Albert's Primary School, Royston Primary, Crookston Castle Primary, and Saint Roch's Primary. All schools, except Saint Roch's Primary, completed the end of programme survey in October/November 2016.

Selection for the programme

Each school must have one class of P3 or P4 participating in Active Play, and up to 10 pupils from a P5 or P6 class to participate in the Play Champs Program.

Play Champs – When asked how pupils were selected for the Go2Play programme, most respondents' spoke of selecting pupils they felt evidenced need. This ranged from pupils who would benefit from leadership experience (in relation to Play Champions), children who experienced difficulties in social interaction or lack self-esteem, to children who required additional language skills. In contrast, some teachers also said they had looked for enthusiasm for engagement among potential participants, or particularly responsible children who would understand the demands of the programme. One respondent said that pupils at their school had self-selected to take part in the programme.

Active Play – Reasons given for selecting a class in the school varied from logistical (such as suitable for timetabling, impact monitoring, or having a teacher receptive to the nature of the programme), to similar demonstration of need. In this selection, head teachers hoped the programme would address problematic group dynamics, for instances groups of pupils who have previously proven unable to play/work sensibly together.

Initial impressions of the programme

Cohort 1 schools were schools who volunteered to be the first schools going through the program, all Head Teachers received a briefing on what Active Play was in the last term of the previous year and against that briefing could choose to volunteer.

The head teachers were asked for their initial thoughts about the Active Play programme, the results of which are shown in Figure 3. Responses indicate initial confidence in the programme, with all agreeing that the programme supports health and well-being outcomes. Responses also suggest that head teachers are keen to integrate the programme in the wider school, as all agreed that they are interested in developing their Play Policies, Resources and Spaces.

Figure 3: Headteacher views (n=10, strongly agree or agree)



***Full answer option:** Staff understand the benefits of physical activity or Active Play type sessions to attainment and health and well-being.

Supporting Active Play

This coincides with an equal recognition that there is room for current school practice and facilities to better accommodate active play (see figure 4), as few respondents agreed that break times are used to develop children's leadership skills, school outdoor spaces encourage active inclusive and fun play, and staff understanding of the benefits of active play to attainment and well-being.

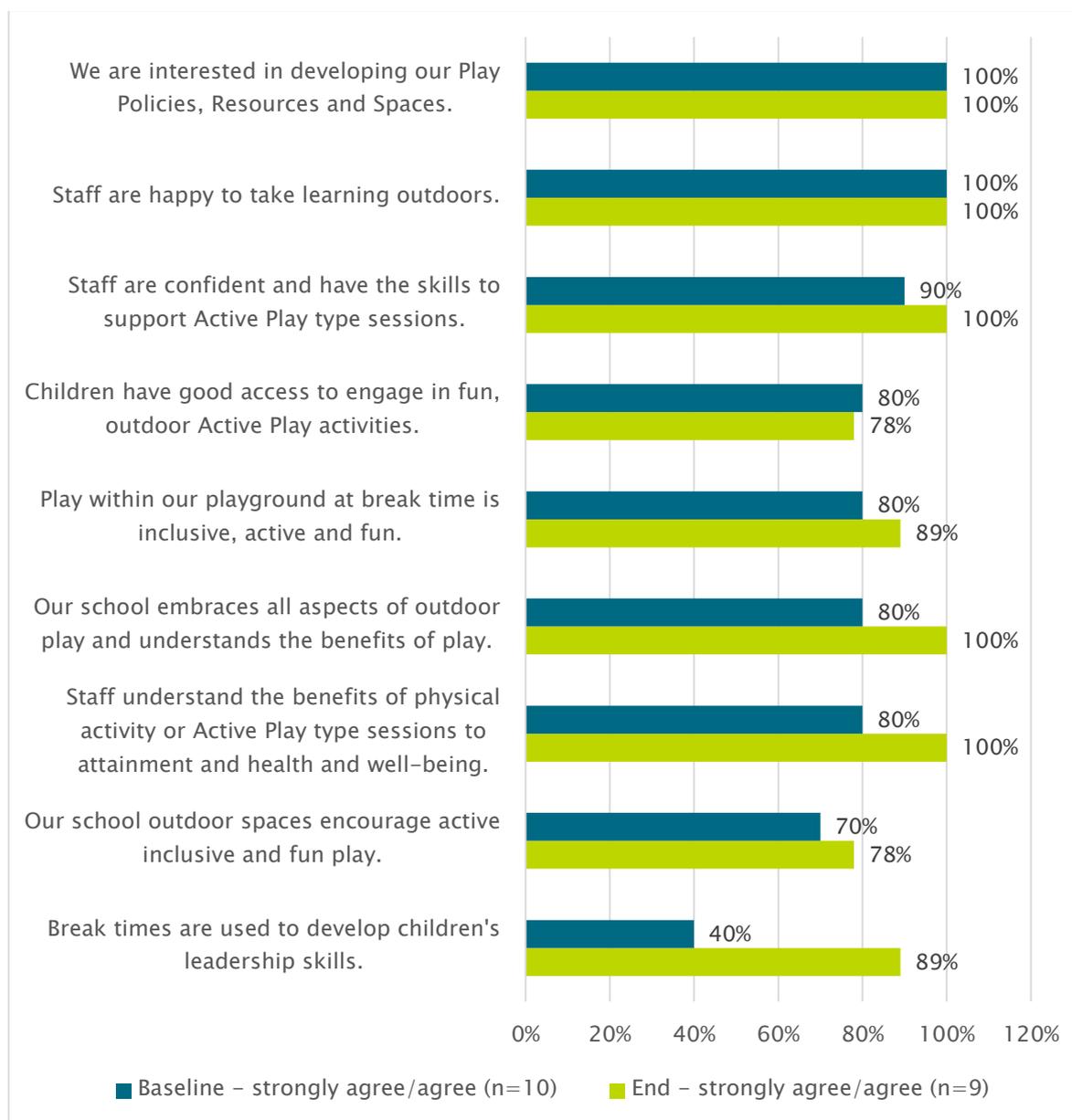
Head teachers were asked more specifically about school policies to support the development of more outdoor play. This included developing outdoor learning position statements and policies for outdoor play, and training play buddies, and some respondents expressed interest in receiving further support for this.

Impact of the programme

The data, as shown in Figure 3 and 4, shows that the schools had a generally good understanding of the benefits of play, and staff had skills and confidence to support children to increase physical activity levels before the programme, but participation in Go2Play has enhanced this.

However it must be noted that through observations conducted throughout the program and from comment received by the play workers during delivery, the confidence and skill set of staff to deliver such session was not there to the level indicated at baseline, with many teachers lacking in skills/confidence but all keen to learn to improve once recognising for themselves, on sessions, where their deficits were.

Figure 4: Head teacher views



For example, survey responses indicate that the understanding of the benefits of play among schools and staff has improved: 80% of respondents agreed that 'our school embraces all aspects of outdoor play and understands the benefits of play' before the programme, but this increased to 100% at the end of the programme. Also, 80% agreed that staff understood the benefits of physical activity or Active Play type sessions to attainment, health and wellbeing before the programme, but this increased to 100% at the end of the programme

Go2Play also appears to have led to some changes in schools' approach to play. For example, only 40% of respondents to the baseline survey agreed that break times are used to develop children's leadership skills, but this increased to 89% by the end of the programme. Similarly, 80% said that play within our

playground at break time is inclusive, safe and fun before the programme, but this increased to 89% at the end.

Staff confidence seems to have increased too: 90% said that staff have the confidence and skills to support an Active Play session before the programme, and this increased to 100% at the end. The programme appears to have had a particularly significant effect on Craigton Primary School. The head teacher disagreed with each of these statements before the programme, but agreed with them at the end:

- Children have good access to engage in fun, outdoor Active Play activities.
- Play within our playground at break time is inclusive, active and fun.
- Our school embraces all aspects of outdoor play and understands the benefits of play.
- Staff understand the benefits of physical activity or Active Play type sessions to attainment and health and wellbeing.
- Break times are used to develop children's leadership skills.

However, as noted from observations undertaken by the Play staff at every session, the staff appear to know and understand the benefits of play and increased physically active play, but they do not facilitate it in every day practice at the outset, with teachers displaying some degree of discomfort at being outside on more inclement days and did always seek to engage in the session.

There is now plans to review baseline and end of program questionnaires to assess the real situation considering in a more structured way the observations from the play staff in supporting this activity.

Taking part in the programme also appears to have highlighted previously unidentified areas for improvement to Royston Primary School. The head teacher agreed with the following statements before the programme but disagreed at the end:

- Children have good access to engage in fun, outdoor Active Play activities.
- Play within our playground at break time is inclusive, active and fun.

It is anticipated that this matter with Royston will be followed up with the School in early January 2017.

Views of the Active Play programme

Figure 5: Head teachers' views of the Active Play programme

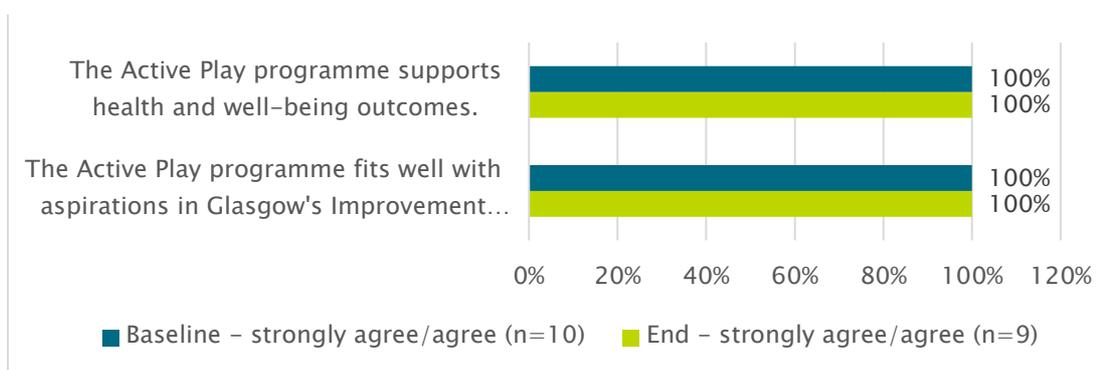


Figure 5 shows that all head teachers who completed the surveys agreed that the Active Play programme supports health and well-being outcomes, and fits well with the aspirations in Glasgow's Improvement Challenge, both before and after the programme.

All head teachers said they now have policies and/or procedures to support the development of more outdoor play, or plan to develop these. One head teacher commented that:

"We are very happy with the progress we have made over the past few years and with the help of the input over the past few months and will move towards producing a play statement for new staff/parents etc. We are absolutely delighted to have had this opportunity to work with the Jeely Piece and their help and support has given us more confidence in our approach to play."

Class teacher focus groups (baseline)

A focus group based questionnaire was developed to be discussed in the class prior to the 10 weeks of Active Play / 8 weeks of Play Champs starting.

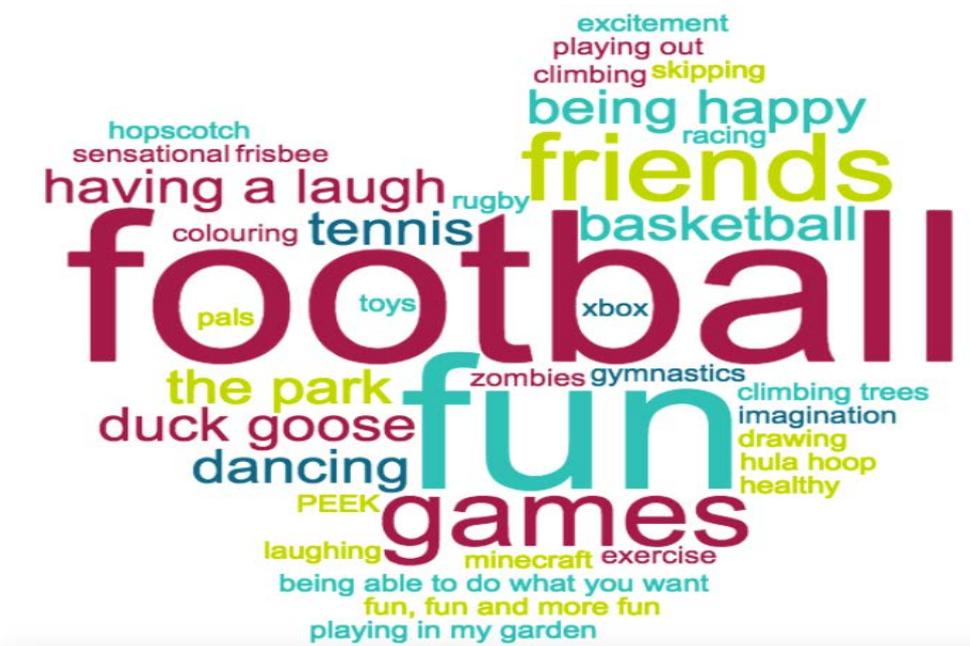
11 class teachers responded from: Avenue End Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Annette Street Primary, Craigton Primary, St. Francis, St. Roch's, Avenue End, Wellshot Primary, Royston Primary, Dalmarock Primary and St Alberts. Teachers mainly taught P4 (7 teachers), while two taught mixed P3/4 classes and two taught P3. Five respondents were working in partnership with Jeely Piece Club, and six with PEEK.

Nine teachers submitted responses from focus groups held at the end of the programme. These responses came from the same list of schools as above except St Alberts and Crookston Castle.

Thoughts about playing

Based on class discussion, teachers gave some of the comments that children had given regarding their thoughts about playing, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: If you think of playing, what do you think of?



A large number of the responses given focused around specific sports or organised activities, such as football and basketball. Other responses included more informal playground games such as 'hide and seek' and 'duck goose', or referring to particular emotions/feelings around play: 'having a laugh', fun and friends.

Outdoor play

Pupils were particularly enthusiastic when they were asked for their thoughts about outdoor play. In addition to referencing specific activities and games, discussion around outdoor play included the opportunity to meet new friends, climbing trees, thinking it was good for them, and it being better than the computer.

Similar responses were received at the end of the programme. Pupils like:

- Playing with their friends and making new friends: "making new friends"
- Being outside: "It's more fun outside, you're not always on your iPad and getting to know the world around you";
- "freedom"; "good outside but boring in school because you can't run".
- Being healthier: "a good way to keep fit"

Key Comment – The vast majority of pupils agreed that they are more active, move around faster and/or run around more when they play outside instead of inside. All teachers responded that the majority of their class felt they moved around more when they played outside, compared to inside.

When participants were asked about things they did that were less active, the majority of responses focused on technology influences: iPads, phones, social media, watching TV, or Xbox.

When asked how long they play outdoors after school, teachers reported that most participants said that they played outdoors after school. However, the range in response detail means it is difficult to gain a full picture of this. We will address this point within our learning as to how we can more effectively gain the evidence to support / dismiss this.

Active play and the benefits

The majority of participants said that they run around during their break time, with very few pupils saying that they would prefer to stay inside instead (albeit at some schools, this is not an option)

Key Comment – There appears to have been a slight increase in the number of children who go outside at break times over the course of the programme. Of the teachers who gave figures, 82% of children said they went outside at break times before the programme, but this increased to 91% among respondents at the end of the programme.

Research acknowledges⁶ that children are more physically active if outside therefore seeing a small % increase in numbers going outside is a positive step in the right direction.

Pupils offered their thoughts about the benefits of being active. Responses included talking about being healthy, fit and strong, and that it was “good for you”.

Other responses referred to the aesthetic or physical implications of exercise: “get big muscles which look good”, “won’t get fat”, “be skinny”.

Others also realised being physically active influenced their ability to do other things: “you will be better at sports”, “run for longer”, “lots of energy to play”, and “won’t get a cough”. Participants in focus groups at the end of the programme made similar comments.

When asked if there was anything else that might make them play more, pupils spoke of having more activities/clubs to do, more money, having friends/family to play with, or even having themed days in school.

Pupils at the end of the programme gave similar responses and identified barriers to playing include: lack of energy, the weather, lack of time, health conditions like asthma and dark nights. This could in part be linked to wider problem with childhood – that of lack of sleep due to bluescreen time and poor diet leading to lack of energy, this has been reviewed in Canada with guidelines now produced for a child’s 24hours⁷.

⁶ <https://www.childrenandnature.org/research/children-who-spend-more-time-outside-are-more-physically-active/>

⁷ <https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/thought-leadership/report-card/2016>

3. Active Play

Active Play staff survey (end of programme)

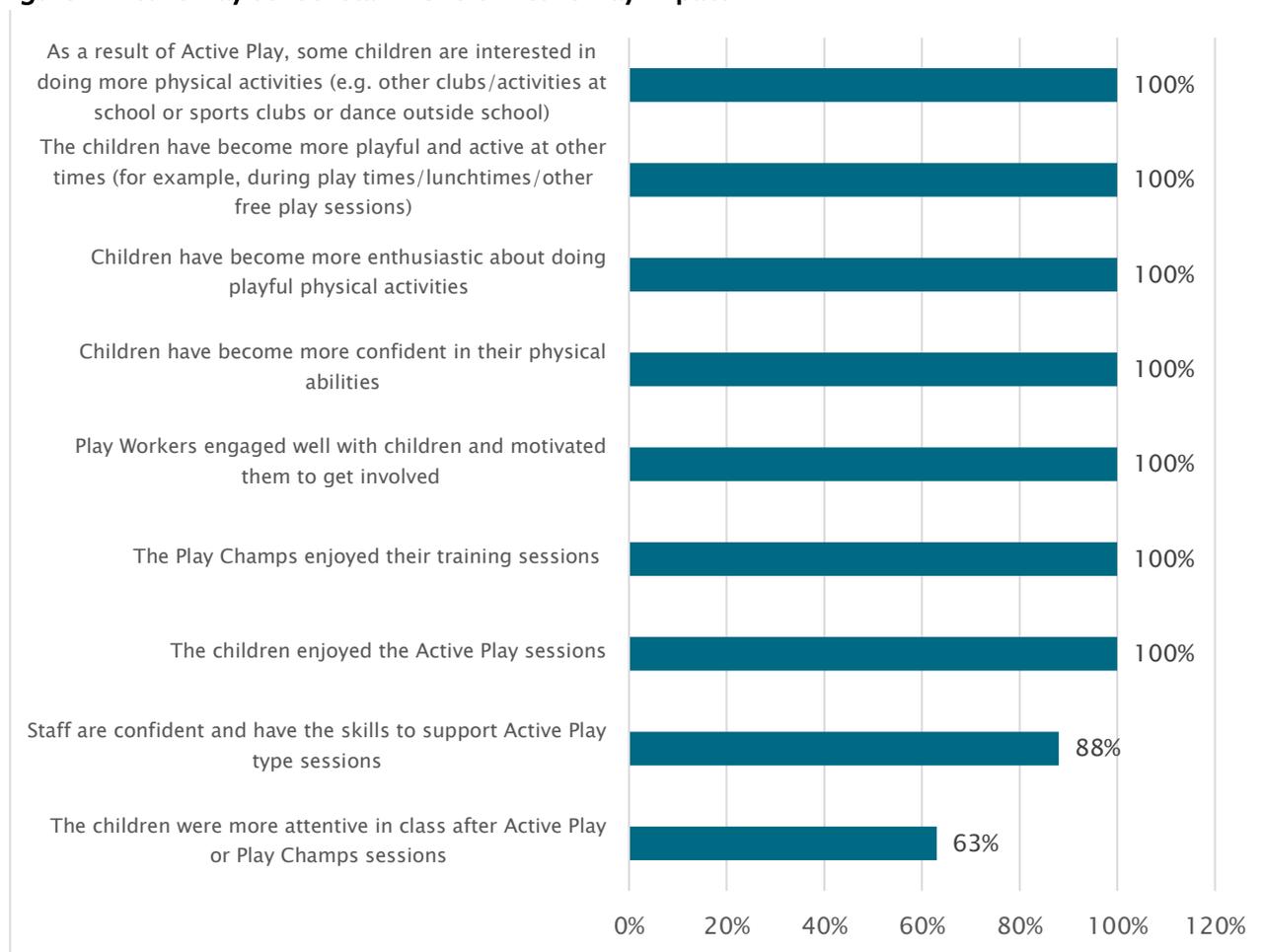
Eight active play staff from six different primary schools completed a survey at the end of the programme, which evidences the changes that the programme has brought about among individuals. The schools were: St. Albert's Primary School (two staff members), Craigton Primary School, Dalmarnock Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Avenue End Primary School (two staff members) and Wellshot Primary School.

Impact on children's attitude to play

Figure 7 shows that these staff were very positive about the impact of the programme on children's attitude to play. All respondents agreed that Active Play led to:

- some children being interested in doing more physical activities (100%);
- children becoming more playful and active (100%); and
- children becoming more enthusiastic about doing playful activities (100%).

Figure 7: Active Play school staff views of Active Play impact



Impact on behaviour

Some staff identified a positive impact of active play on children's behaviour inside and outside class. For example, nearly two-thirds of staff (63%) agreed that children were **more attentive** in class after Active Play or Play Champs sessions, as shown in Figure Z. For some children, it appears that the programme acted as an **incentive to behave well** in class: one staff member said that:

“the children really wanted to take part on the play programme and thus their behaviour leading up to the sessions was great as they did not want to miss out. Over the programme the **children's behaviour outside improved**, along with their **problem-solving ability**”.

Another commented that children learned about how to deal with losing, increasing their resilience:

“at the beginning of the sessions the children found it difficult to cope with losing in games. This resulted in negative behaviours being displayed. As the weeks progressed it was evident the children were making progress with being able to move on from results and even praise others with their successes”.

One staff member talked about the positive impact of play on children's resilience:

“These games helped to **build the resilience** with the children. If they fell over at the beginning, there would be lots of tears. Whereas week 10 for minor incident the children would stand up and literally brush off their knees and continue playing”.

On the other hand, however, a few staff members reported problems with behaviour. One said “some pupils struggle with social interaction and this resulted in some behaviour issues arising during sessions and continuing on when returning to class”.

Another noted that it can be difficult to calm children down for lessons immediately after a play session: “most of the children are on a high [after a play session] and we usually have to do some calming/meditation before we get started on lessons” (St Albert's Primary School). Another said “the number of children have difficulty listening to and following instructions and this was evident when outdoors which impacted upon their engagement levels” (Avenue End Primary School).

Impact on confidence

As Figure 7 shows, all respondents felt that children became more confident in their physical abilities. One respondent commented that, “**children are becoming more confident in... physical activities**”.

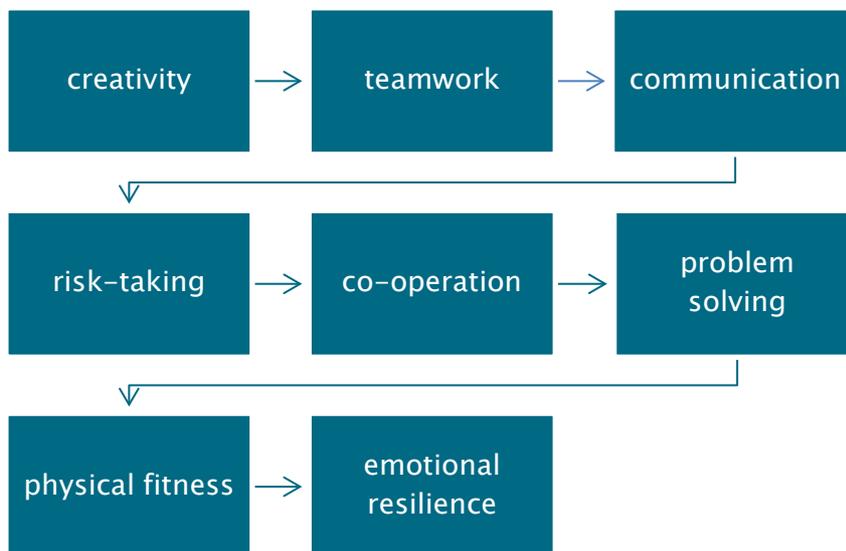
Staff also commented on improvements in children's general self-confidence, for example:

- “[Children are] more able to give things a go with less fear of failure”.
- “The majority of the children grew in confidence with regards to their own personal risk taking. As the weeks progressed the children would create their own games and ask other children out with their usual friendship group if they wanted to participate without worrying what the response would be”.

- “They have become very confident individuals”.

Skills development

Staff identified a range of skills that children developed including:



Impact on staff

The programme appears to have had a positive impact on staff's attitudes towards play and physical activity. All respondents agreed that Active Play has:

- changed their views about the benefits of increasing levels of play and physical activity for children;
- has made me more likely to do more outdoor activities in school/nursery.

Staff also agreed that the programme had a **positive impact on their own skills, confidence and practice**. Staff noted that they learned a great deal from the programme. All agreed that the experience allowed them to **learn new games or activities** which they could **use in future to encourage children to be more active**. Other comments included:

- “we learned a lot about new games”;
- “how to structure the play session and how to use simple equipment for a variety of games”;
- “learned a lot of fun games to utilise in the playground or gym area”.

Sustained legacy

Nearly all (7, 88%) agreed that they are **likely to continue to use these games and activities** with the children in their class/group and the same number said they **feel more confident** now to deliver the games/activities they saw take place in Active Play. One said I “feel more comfortable leading games”.

Eighty-eight per cent agreed that staff are confident and have the skills to support Active Play type sessions (Figure 6).

Challenges for continuing to deliver play

Staff identified a number of challenges to continuing delivery of active play and play in their school, including:

- the pressures of an already packed curriculum;
- some teachers might not enjoy or want to participate physical activity;
- Play Champs may not have the desire to continue long-term;
- lack of equipment; and
- lack of staff to support play activities.

Active Play Outputs

The Active Play outputs cover five cohorts, three partnering in with Jeely Piece Club and two with PEEK.

In total, there were 2,171 attendances at Active Play sessions across ten classes at ten schools. One hundred sessions were delivered, with an average of 21.17 children participating in each session (the average is reduced as one school Avenue End only had a class of 18 pupils compared to most others being 28 to 31 in size).

All class teachers from the ten classes took part in every Active Play session.

There were eight Play Champs sessions delivered, with a total attendance of 694 and an average of 8.68 children participating in each session. Ten Support for Learning Workers took part in Play Champs sessions.

Across Active Play and Play Champs, four schools had a significant proportion of children from black or minority ethnic communities, including one school where all children participating were from a BME background.

Between 50% and 100% of pupils in the programme are living in the top 15% most deprived areas of Scotland, according to the SIMD – the intention is to refine how this question is approached and utilise the data available from Andrea Crawford's PEPASS team to more clearly identify statistics.

Active Play forms

Active Play Venture Observation forms, received by 9 schools, suggest that the active play sessions have facilitated children's involvement in physical outdoor play. Children commented that there was, "lots of running around, it makes you sweat", "I can hardly breath now". Thus demonstrating the increased level of physical activity within the session.

Children and staff saw the benefits of this, as it encouraged children to develop new skills, “look how much better I am already after practicing”, “I’m so fast”, “I could only do 2, now I can do 10”, “normally I’m out of breath but not today”, meaning they viewed the programme positively, “can you come every day?”, “can we stay outside all the time”, and children gradually became more resilient to poor weather conditions. In one school, 99% of the class raised their hands when asked if they had become more active and fitter.

For some children, this meant that they have become more active outside of the specific sessions. For example, some children told staff that they have been running a daily mile, other children have become involved in after school activities such as football, tennis and gymnastics, and other were becoming more involved in informal outdoor play, such as buying a skipping rope: “I play outside every day and climb, that’s why I’m so good”. Or participating in a local play ranger service.

This also translated into encouraging other children to involve themselves in play: “I taught my friends a game at home”, while another had taught friends a pirate game.

Particularly positive comments from staff were noted on the forms, and were seen to benefit the programme. For example, encouraging young people “you’re doing fab”, “I’ve never seen her do sports before but she loves tennis”, or providing suitable equipment for the children to use in their play. One teacher said, “I don’t know what we’ll do after this week, the kids love it and it burns a lot of energy”, “this is the most I’ve seen him smile for months at active play”. School staff commented that their confidence had improved in facilitating play-time, and some were introducing it to scheduled gym time at school.

4. Play Champs

Play Champion forms

Play Champions forms give insight about the experience and learning from this strand of the programme. In total, Play Champion feedback forms were received from 10 schools; five of which were supported by Jeely and the remaining 5 were supported by Peek. Each session was attended by an average of 8.68 children.

Comments on the forms describe the almost universal benefit of the programme, as formerly shy children have become able to lead sessions, and children have become more confident, both verbally and in terms of their posture: "I can see real changes in the kids, some are huge – one girl is really quiet but really shows confidence of leadership at play champions, even leading a game on week 2"; "the difference in the kids is amazing, they have come on leaps and bounds"; "X spoke in assembly, I mean she would have never done that before".

Since involvement in the programme, a number of children have been involved in leading games outside of class, or developing games: "can we play my game I made it up by myself", "I really really want to lead a game for the group please, I've been thinking of one all week", "I played a game to my friends last week".

Heavy involvement and enthusiasm of staff was seen to contribute towards the impact of the programme. Some school staff also commented on ways that they had benefited from the programme: "I really feel my confidence has grown a lot, I may seem confident but not when it comes to physical activity. So this has been great for me as well as for the kids". Similarly, communication and effective listening between pupils was seen as integral to the effect of the programme; "everyone listens to me, I have a game", "I'll help you deliver your game for you", "I think if we work together we can make the game better".

Few negative comments were made about the delivery of the programme. In instances where there were negative comments, these were location-specific; such as a poor behaviour from individual children (getting over-excited), children getting distracted during poor weather, or the school having "mixed-up" arrangement that affected the space or facilities available. Despite this, both parents and staff were enthusiastic about the programme and are keen for it to continue: "please don't leave", "we are hoping to keep this going in some way".

Class teacher focus group responses (end of programme)

Responses were also received from focus groups with Play Champs at ten schools, which indicate the following:

- More willingness to 'teach' new games to their friends: "I teach all of my pals games in the playground and with my pals at my bit";
- Awareness of the importance of an inclusive approach to play: "I can come up with games much easier and make sure they are inclusive";
- An increased knowledge of games: "We know more games"; and

- New friends: "I have more friends now".

5. Summary and Learning

Impact

Overall it is felt the Active Play program worked, within the Active Play classes the impact was positive with children recognising and enjoying being more physically active through the play based intervention

Children highlighted for themselves that they

- Used more energy – got out of breath and moved more/moved faster and enjoyed it via the sessions
 - Contributing to increased physical activity and could be argued contributed to increased MVPA a key marker for a healthier life
- Made friends, spoke with and engaged with children in their class not normally in 'their group'
 - Contributing to wider peer/social networks and learning to understand and recognise people's differences – in part contributing to towards tolerance
- Understood how to react when sharing or losing at a game, or how to manage themselves if they fell over
 - Demonstrating a contribution to increasing the children's resilience
- Children used more creative approaches via the free play element and made up games for themselves
 - This demonstrates the ability to think creatively and put creativity into action via the games.

There was also positive feedback from the teaching staff involved who recognised that the children did demonstrated

- Increased levels of physical activity via the Active Play sessions;
- Showed and demonstrated problem solving abilities via the games on offer;
- Increased their skill levels particularly around certain games focussing on Fundamental Movement skills;
- Thought creatively in relation to games and their play – and put that through into action.

This is not the full list but identifies that Active Play not only contributes to overall Health and Wellbeing it also contributes significantly to health and wellbeing outcomes as identified in the Curriculum for Excellence.

The Play Champs activity also delivered positives for the children and indeed the LfSW who participated and supported the play leadership program.

Children selected for the program from within a P5 or P6 class had been specifically identified for issues, concerns that the Class teacher had with the child. As noted previously this might have been lack of confidence to overly intrusive behaviour. All children that participated for the full 8 weeks were noted by

class teachers as benefitting, and all children seemed to flourish with the responsibility and leadership they were being able to display through training.

“the difference in the kids is amazing, they have come on leaps and bounds”;

In addition, the LfSW also gained positive experiences from participating, it was hoped their skills set would evolve and they would enable and support the children in the playground when they were leading sessions as play champs, however the impact has been greater with staff not only facilitating but actively encouraging more physically active and collegiate play in the playground.

LfSW noted that it has made their jobs easier to work with and see happier, engaged children. Reduced incidences of playground issues have also occurred in several schools which we will seek to review more fully in the next cohort.

One school Wellshot also noted how positively it has been on a very quiet member of LfSW staff who is engaged in the playground and has ‘come out of their shell’, this is highlighted in the Wellshot case study in Appendix 1.

Learning

There are several areas where we have learnt from the Active Play and Play Champs program that we will need to address and review in readiness for and during Cohort 2, this falls into 3 main areas

Process

- Initially we anticipated the class teachers would lead on the assessing baseline within the class as to the pupils ‘normal’ active life both in and outside school. It became apparent early in Cohort 1 that the class did not readily engage in the conversation as much as was hoped, and on the instances where the play workers were there the class engagement increased in this topic area. Therefore, we propose for all future baseline focus group questioning of the children around their current play habits will be delivered by the play staff from Peek/JEELY and supported by the Class Teacher
- Baseline questionnaires for Head Teachers and Teaching staff did not engender conversation or reflection as was hoped, and from practice observed within the following Active Play session we know that the questions were answered in reflection of what a School teacher should do and not necessarily what happens. Therefore, the proposal is to review the end of program questionnaires to enable teachers to be more reflective on any change they have had in their personal thought and engagement around active play and play champs.

Delivery

- All schools were keen to support delivery and made available their playgrounds each and every time, however schools varied in the equipment they had to support active Play, and it relied on the staff from the venture to bring along some items. It is proposed for the future that each charity has an ‘active play’ kit bag to utilise.

- The equipment issue, the play staff encouraged and supported the Teaching staff to consider loose parts play⁸ that could be readily sourced free from local shops, organisations or via the pupils themselves. The Loose parts toolkit was provided to schools and it appeared to ease the concern. Most schools felt they needed to 'buy' equipment and there was limited engagement or thought into how they might access material for free. This was a comment from both play charities – who coming from that charitable background – have the mindset potentially of what can be achieved freely/reduced cost BEFORE anything is ever purchased. This is something we intend to address and support as the Cohorts progress.
- Schools noted they had or would wish for Policies and procedures to enable more outdoor learning and play – this is an areas where Inspiring Scotland may seek to request from each cohort 1 school a conversation to actually address what each school has and what deficit there is that they could address.

Sustainability/Legacy

Active play – it was always hoped that by engaging the class teacher in every single session and by providing them with the Active Play guides and shortly the Active Play website (due in Jan 2017) that the staff would feel sufficiently confident to continue to deliver and support active play in their teaching as it contributes to many health wellbeing, literacy and numeracy outcomes.

However Teachers noted that despite their enthusiasm felt they had other competing pressures in certain circumstance

- the pressures of an already packed curriculum;
- some teachers might not enjoy or what to participate in physical activity;
- lack of equipment.

Therefore, to aid this and support the Schools and staff to engage for the longer term we intend to:

- offer at least 1 per term additional CPD training coordinated through the GCC PEPASS team;
- seek to develop a way of re-engaging with each school the term after the program delivery, supporting a play worker to visit to see how everyone is getting on and to boost confidence/practice skills;
- launch the active play website with a wide range of tools and games that teachers can reflect on and use to aid them to continue to deliver active play.

With regard to equipment this has been addressed by the Loose Parts Toolkit referred to above.

⁸ <http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/media/58451/Loose-Parts-Play-web.pdf>

Conclusion

From a standing start in the late Spring/Early Summer of 2016 to now, the program has been developed, staff at the play ventures have been trained, teaching Staff and Head Teachers have been advised, trained at In Service days and had 1-2-1 sessions with the Play ventures in readiness for Active Play.

10 schools were selected, 10 schools participated in both Active Play and Play Chaps, evaluation has been conducted, outputs have been collated, and Cohort 2 start on January 5th

The positive outcomes that have been delivered are significant considering the volume of work undertaken by all, in this relatively short time frame, and the learning gathered from the evaluation and reflection is appropriate to the scale of the 1st cohort's activities.

The positive outcomes noted for and by the children – supporting their overall Health and Wellbeing, their enjoyment of physical activity and the associated broader outcomes of delivered on increased self confidence, creativity, resilience, peer support and positive behaviour supports the role active Play and Play Champs has in primary schools.

The additional positive outcomes noted by Teachers and SfLW in increasing their skill sets and confidence to support and deliver more play and more physically active play is also a positive to be drawn from this work

It is anticipated that the changes and amendments will be made and the 2nd cohort will be reviewed in a similar fashion to review if the changes worked or not, what else can be learnt from the process and what impact is being activities by the condition activities that of the CPD and the new website.

Appendix 1: Case Study: Wellshot Primary School



Case study: Wellshot Primary School

Wellshot Primary School in Glasgow's Tollcross area has been taking part in the Glasgow Active Play programme, run by go2play with funding from Glasgow City Council Education.

The programme has been delivered by go2play partner charity PEEK and involves weekly Active Play sessions in school, separate from PE and break time, for primary 4 pupils. Pupils from primary 6 have also been taking part in the Play Champions programme which teaches them to take a leading role in facilitating play for younger pupils.

Staff and pupils at the school have embraced the programme and both Active Play and Play Champions have had immediate positive effects throughout the school.

Active Play is designed to increase physical activity levels for primary-age children by introducing active games and play into schools.

Following the programme, staff at Wellshot have noted an immediate increase in physical activity among pupils at break time and positive changes have also taken place throughout the school and beyond. Children have increased awareness of play opportunities outdoors and outside of school and no longer rely on play "resources" to enjoy playing.

Primary 4 teacher Ms. Di Pasquale said the pupils' ability to work together and solve problems has developed thanks to their engagement with play and through learning new games. And this improvement was not restricted to the playground either as pupils also improved problem solving in the classroom and teaching environment. In both Play Champions and Active Play, pupils are encouraged to develop their own games which has led to a notable improvement in creativity and imagination.

The enthusiasm for Active Play among the pupils has been so strong that Ms. Di Pasquale has used the play programme in her behaviour strategy, encouraging positive behaviour with Active Play as a reward.

The participants of the Play Champions programme have also been incredibly enthusiastic about play. Staff at



Glasgow Active Play



"Pupils are encouraged to develop their own games which has led to a notable improvement in creativity and imagination."



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Case study: Wellshot Primary School

Wellshot decided to get pupils in primary 6 to apply for the limited Play Champions places and several pupils who had previously lacked confidence and appeared quiet and shy applied, encouraged by the chance to take a leading role. The outcome was great.

In their own evaluation of the programme, pupils described how they felt "more confident" and had learnt how to "get more people cooperating." One pupil said they had learnt "confidence, trust and respect", another said they had learnt to "respect other people's ideas" and another said they were now better at "helping people play and building confidence and trust."

From the outset, the school used the introduction of the Active Play and Play Champions to develop confidence, leadership and responsibility beyond the Play Champions participants by setting up a school Play Committee. The committee is run by pupils and is charged with encouraging Active Play and play cooperation throughout the whole school. One of the achievements of the Play Committee was to organise for the Play Champions graduates to teach other pupils to become Play Champions.

The benefits of both programmes have also had a positive effect on staff. Teachers are encouraged to take part in Active Play alongside pupils and Ms. Di Pasquale said the programme had helped to develop her relationship with pupils. Seeing pupils in a new situation, she could observe emotional and social interactions she was not normally privy to and then tailor her teaching and classroom interaction.

Furthermore, Learning Support Assistant Denise was encouraged to take a lead role in running the Play Champions programme which helped boost her own confidence and develop her relationship with pupils. After her experience, Denise then took charge of training other support staff in play and play support.

The entire staff and pupils of Wellshot Primary School have embraced the Glasgow Active Play programme and benefits have been huge. PEEK staff stopped running the programme after 10 weeks but the school is continuing to make play a major part of the pupils' school experience.



Glasgow Active Play



"The programme has helped to develop Ms. Di Pasquale's relationship with pupils."



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