



Opening
School
Facilities

End of Year Report

2023 - 2024

Delivered by:



Funded by:



Opening School Facilities - End of Year 2 Report 23/24

Executive Summary

The Active Partnerships network, in collaboration with national partners StreetGames, ukactive and the Youth Sport Trust, has been awarded up to £57m of funding from the Department for Education to help schools open their sports facilities outside of the school day to both school and community users. The aim of the programme is to create a sustainable increase in physical activity levels in communities where they are needed most.

All 43 Active Partnership (AP) areas worked with a total of 1,467 targeted schools over the last year to deliver 92,938 sessions. This has given us a great learning platform going into Year 3.

Over the course of this last year we have seen successes, faced some barriers and as a network we are looking at changes for Year 3, to ensure we keep the momentum going and continue the excellent work that is coming through from the programme.

The keys successes and learnings we have seen throughout the year that have enabled us to see the impact so far have been;

1. Engaging with the 'right' people in school makes the difference
2. Partnership and collaboration
3. Connecting to the whole / seeing the bigger picture to ensure greater success and enables wider opportunities
4. Involving Children and Young People and creating Young Leaders

Some of the key barriers and challenges that we have faced over the last year are;

1. Programme processes are causing barriers
2. Unable to use funds for capital spend
3. Staffing issues within schools
4. Not fully engaging the community offer

These are the changes as a network we are putting in place to ensure we keep improving and seeing the impact that the programme is clearly providing.

1. Shifting the focus to evaluation, community use and sustainability
2. Easing the admin burden
3. Enabling a greater community offer
4. Doubling down on the successes

The Impact of Opening School Facilities (OSF) so far

OSF has had a great impact on communities, schools, Active Partnerships and the consortium since it started in 2023. Here we explore the extent to which OSF has achieved its targets from the Department for Education, and we analyse the expected, and unexpected, outcomes for those involved.

The achievement of DfE key performance indicators so far

For Year 2 of the programme, we were given very clear targets from the Department for Education (DfE) to engage 112,500 young people and 37,500 community users in sport and physical activity on 1100 school sites.

Through a collective effort, we have significantly overachieved on the targets as outlined towards the bottom of the page:

The Consortium Principles of OSF

At the outset of the programme, the consortium agreed a number of key principles for the programme, strengthening the relationship between Active Partnerships (APs), schools and other stakeholders to open school facilities to school and community users.

The principles were:

1. Tackling inequalities
2. Long term system change
3. Alignment with policy
4. Added value
5. Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)
6. National coverage through local reach and insight
7. Collaboration and co-design including youth voice

Targets Groups

1. FSM (Free School Meals)
2. Females
3. SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
4. EDC (Ethnically Diverse Communities)

School Reach

Identify schools using the following methods:

1. Utilising data e.g., FSM data, IMD (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) and IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index).
2. Broader engagement with schools including School Games Organisers (SGO) network, intel from OSF phase 1 & 2, schools which complement other priorities of the AP.
3. Engagement with local partners e.g., Public Health teams to identify priority areas.

Success of Year 2

Following the analysis of the data we have received from schools, we can confirm that the OSF programme has surpassed the targets that were set by the Department for Education. Highlighted below are the key statistics for Year 2:

1,467 schools involved in the OSF programme so far.

168,889 Children and Young People involved in the programme

57,006 Community users involved in the programme

92,938 OSF sessions delivered over the course of Year 2 of the programme.

This infographic highlights the key successes of year 2:

1,467

schools involved in the OSF programme



168,889

children & young people have taken part in the OSF programme



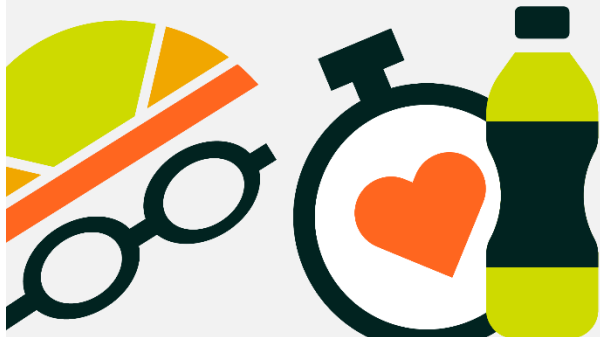
57,006

people from the local community part of the OSF programme



92,938

OSF sessions delivered



4

partners delivering the OSF programme – funded by the Department for Education



All 43 Active Partnerships involved in the OSF programme

Of the 1,467 schools involved in the programme; 71% of the schools signed up to the programme are based in the 1-5 Index Deprivation Affecting Children Index, so prioritising those in disadvantaged areas.

As part of the programme, there has been emphasis on swimming and water safety, to increase the number of children and young people able to swim 25m. We have 222 projects focusing on swimming and water safety covering all nine regions.

Expected outcome	Extent to which achieved so far
<p>Pupils and members of the community being more physically active and having more access to activities</p>	<p>There are many examples of school pupils being more physically active since the introduction of OSF funded activities, with many of the barriers faced to being physically active being removed, such as access to opportunities and clubs.</p> <p><i>“Being able to go straight after school is a great opportunity. Otherwise, if it was a long way away and our parents are at work”</i> Pupil, roller-skating club, Middlesborough</p> <p><i>“My parents can’t find any clubs in my area, I’ve asked, but basically school clubs help me.”</i> Primary school pupil, Plymouth</p> <p><i>“When I started in Reception, I couldn’t swim at all and was scared. But now I’m a good swimmer and love spending time in the pool.”</i> Bewcastle School, Cumbria</p> <p>OSF has been an enabler for schools and community groups to engage different demographics in physical activity.</p> <p><i>“The ‘sporty crew’ and those already active were not the vulnerable groups we were targeting. We quickly realised it was the non-competitive element of physical activity that was drawing in children we were targeting.”</i> PE and after-school provision lead, Primary school, Middlesborough</p> <p><i>“The school have seen significant improvements in the level of engagement with Drumba compared to usual PE lessons, with those who were previously disengaged with PE loving the Drumba sessions. As the sessions have been so popular, Drumba has now been embedded into the school’s curriculum.”</i> Bure Park Primary School, Bicester</p> <p>It has also enabled community members and students to have more access to activities</p> <p><i>“For some of our children, school is their one constant and the more provision we can provide for them the better. The OSF fund has allowed us to provide exciting activities for our children and families.”</i> PE Lead, St Thomas Moorside School, Oldham</p>
<p>Pupils and members of the community having improved connections to their local community</p>	<p>There has been a real shift across some areas where schools and the local community have developed strong relationships, which has enabled pupils and members of the community to have improved connections within their communities.</p>

	<p><i>“Some have progressed and started attending a locally community table tennis club and have met other people through this.”</i> Deputy Head, Coventry primary school</p> <p><i>“This is the only place where I can meet new people, I come and make friends and my kids are also very happy making new friends”</i> Community user, Women’s only sport session, Sheffield</p>
<p>Improved social development, mental health and empowerment</p>	<p>Signs of the impact on social development, mental health and empowerment are starting to surface, with particular themes of resilience, routine and motivation emerging strongly.</p> <p><i>“What do you think parkour has helped you with?” “Like resilience and stuff like that. Keep on going on, don’t stop even if it’s really hard. You keep on trying and trying again so you can do it anywhere until it’s a natural thing to do”</i> Primary school pupil, Coventry</p> <p><i>“Gave me discipline and be motivated. I can apply a routine and apply it to other things and education.”</i> Secondary school gym users, Ilford</p> <p><i>“Going to Kickstart Breakfast Club has made my school day better. The morning routine makes me feel good, which makes me learn better in class. The club also means I get to spend time with my friends and has become a part of my daily routine.”</i> Year 8 at Poltair School, Cornwall</p> <p>Not only that, we are seeing an even greater impact on students on free school meals, with wider impact on attendance and social skills.</p> <p><i>“Being able to offer FSM students in my year group a positive intervention, with an amazing facility, has had a positive impact on attendance, social skills and physical and mental wellbeing. Being able to upskill myself in order to deliver the project means that it is sustainable, and I get to see firsthand the impact it has on young people.”</i> Head of Year 9 at Poltair School, Cornwall</p>
<p>Feeling safe and supported to do physical activity so feel they can stretch and challenge themselves further</p>	<p>Some note how the activities they are attending are a good springboard for their future plans around physical activity.</p> <p><i>“The gym at school is a good starting point. If you don’t have a gym membership you can build confidence ready for an actual gym and you know what you’re doing.”</i> Secondary school pupil, Ilford, London</p>

Unexpected outcomes

Whilst we are seeing great strides towards achieving the expected outcomes for participants of OSF funded activities, we have also seen some unexpected outcomes emerge.

One of the most prominent unexpected outcomes for those participating is the **impact on the wider family unit**, particularly carers of school pupils, who have seen many positive impacts from their dependents taking part. Some are able to work for longer.

“The after-school sessions have been absolutely fantastic. It has enabled me to work for longer. For my daughter Maddie it has been great for her to get some extra fitness in.”

Parent of child who attends Archery Upshire Primary School, Essex

Whilst others note the benefits of it being low cost, or in some cases, free:

“I’m connected with the school as well as Abbey Youth FC and with both hats on it has been brilliant to see younger age groups being offered football for free. We need more activity clubs that are free to help more parents out as money is a challenge, but it also helps with obesity rates – we just need this for more people.”

Parent of child who attend KS1 Football Upshire Primary School, Essex

“I couldn’t recommend it enough the school need to keep doing it. My daughter comes out from the football club worn out. It’s been brilliant for her to try something without me having to fork out for all the gear before I know if she really likes it or not. That said she has loved football and now I can’t keep her away from it so now I am looking to get her into FAE Waltham Abbey FC.”

Parent of child who attend KS1 Football Upshire Primary School, Essex

There have also been positive mental wellbeing impacts on those attending, and the opportunity to exercise together as a family.

“Moved to the area a few months ago, not being able to speak English very well. The fitness class was very welcoming and is a great to have an activity I can do with my child.”

“Thank you for a great session both myself and children had a great time, to not worry about childcare each week is amazing”

Family Zumba Sessions, Merchants Academy Secondary School, Bristol

Schools we fund

For the schools who host OSF funded activities, we wanted to understand:

To what extent has OSF led to schools being more able to reach and engage their local community in physical activity, and to create a sustainable business model which ensures opportunities continue after OSF funding finishes?

The outcomes we were expecting were:

- More able to reach and engage their local community in physical activity
- Create a sustainable business model which ensures opportunities continue after OSF funding finishes

The table below details the extent to which we feel these outcomes have been achieved so far.

Expected outcome	Extent to which achieved so far
More able to reach and engage their local community in physical activity	Our survey of schools¹ found that 62% of schools state that OSF has helped engage their community in physical activity to a greater extent (28% somewhat).

¹ 22 responses as of April 2024

The majority of schools state that OSF has enabled schools to do this by allow them to attract new participants (67%).

"We attracted new participants to swimming activities, families who don't normally swim joined the holiday swimming project by bringing their children as a regular weekly activity during the summer holidays. They told us they liked the fact that everything was organised for them - the transport, the sessions at the pool led by two swimming instructors - that it was free and the whole family could participate in going to the pool.

We found that as confidence grew over the weeks, parents, grandparents, guardians wanted to go in the water with their children. Adults said that it was good to have families they knew all going together and that there was always a member of school staff to sort everything out due to the language barrier. They also liked the fact that it was a regular session through the holidays which gave them something to look forward to each week.

The children said they loved trying a new activity with their parents and siblings. A number of families have since signed up to private children's lessons and others are taking their children to family leisure sessions at weekends. School swimming lessons are benefitting from the new found confidence. Our Y4s have had four lessons so far this academic year with 100% attendance which has never happened before."

Phillimore Community Primary School, Yorkshire

"Due to the new equipment that has been purchased in year 1 and the new stuff on order during year 2 it is allowing us with widen the scope of attendance to after school clubs. This has seen a big increase in girls' participation in the fitness room too."

The Gilbert School, Essex

29% of schools also noted it increased their confidence in delivering new and different physical activity.

"By having the new golf equipment that was usable on the school site we have been able to offer golf to our students, our local primary school students and other users in the local community. The training from the Golf Foundation was excellent and we now have a team of 10 people able to deliver golf safely and effectively on the school site without the need to visit a golf club.

It has also allowed us to attract a new audience that may not have been participating in an after-school sports club previously. New golfers have been to the sessions and are now keen to continue to develop their golf skills thanks to the funding. We have also re-engaged several students with the sport that had been to the driving range once or twice but had never had the opportunity to have proper coaching. It has been an absolute success!"

Blenheim High School, Surrey

Schools are also developing partnerships, to further extend their reach in the future.

"We were able to secure partnerships with external providers, including Doncaster Knights, Doncaster Town Cricket Club, Armthorpe Bowls etc. These partnerships will see further collaboration into the future which will benefit our local community."

Armthorpe Shaw Wood Academy, Yorkshire

<p>Create a sustainable business model which ensures opportunities continue after OSF funding finishes</p>	<p>86% of schools² state that OSF has so far helped them to develop a sustainable business model to ensure opportunities continue after OSF funding finishes (either answering somewhat or to a great extent). However, 14% of schools do not believe it has yet enabled them to create a sustainable business model.</p> <p>The reasons why OSF has enabled the creation of a sustainable business model are varied: a third (33%) state it has been because it has enabled their facilities to become sustainable, whilst an additional third (33%) state it was down to developing new relationships and/or partnerships.</p> <p><i>“As with any business model, a trial is required to ensure that the demand identified is accurate and correct. The cost and staffing are the biggest commitment, and this has to be sustainable for the future and be a benefit to the school and community. Allowing us to purchase equipment and try new suppliers and build relationships allows the focus to be on sustainability and impact now and the future.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Grimes Dyke Primary School, Yorkshire</p> <p>Other reasons include making activities financially sustainable (14%) and upskilling staff (14%).</p> <p><i>“CPD for staff and students has been an invaluable tool that we have used funding in order to access. That has been for new and existing sports, and we have further plans in year 3 for continuation of this model. We have also been able to use external coaches to improve the provision of a range of sports.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cecil Jones Academy, Essex</p> <p><i>“We were able to train staff to use more equipment at our school site which has allowed us to keep costs down for our users. This makes the programme more attractive to our community users but also enables us concentrate finances in other areas to promote the programme further.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Handsworth Grange Community Sports College, Yorkshire</p> <p>Many feel it is not just due to one of these reasons, but due to a combination:</p> <p><i>“The key to success was improved resources and facilities coupled with forming new relationships with staff and providers.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">The Deanes School, Essex</p>
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Unexpected outcomes

Whilst we are seeing movement towards achieving the expected outcomes for schools, we have also seen some unexpected outcomes emerge.

For many, OSF has been an opportunity to be flexible, try new things and be experimental, which has been refreshing for the schools involved. It has allowed them to offer new experiences to their children without restrictions on what they could spend the money on.

“Having the funding available enabled us to try something new without having to worry about the costs. We could be more experimental and offer new experiences to our children.”

Sharrow Nursery Infant and Junior School, Yorkshire

² School survey, 22 responses

"A big pro was the freedom to choose from whatever we wanted. Money-wise, we could spend this on anything that could enhance our physical activity opportunities."

PE teacher, Secondary school, Nottingham

This flexibility, and ability to think differently, has allowed schools to challenge how they think about traditional ways of being active, and providing opportunities to students who wouldn't always engage with physical activity.

"Thinking differently and real innovation is encouraged, and schools have used drums, mud kitchens, transformed outdoor play and forest school to challenge how we think about traditional ways to be active – with incredible results."

Active Oxfordshire

"We have been able to use the funding flexibly in a way that suits our students who normally would not wish to engage in extra-curricular physical activity opportunities."

Howard Junior School representative, Norfolk

Schools also noted that they have seen improved attendance from those pupils who have been attending OSF funded activities.

"Students who were regular non-attendees to lessons are now coming in to school, particularly if they know it's a gym day."

Assistant head, SEND school, Basingstoke

"You don't want to get in trouble and sent home otherwise you'll miss it. If you do work faster, you'll get there quicker."

SEND student, Coventry

However, not all the unexpected outcomes were positive. In one case, for example, schools were worried about the extra physical activity some students were taking up, without the additional take up of food and drink to support that.

"We were worried about some of the vulnerable children we were targeting. It would have been really useful to spend some money on food/drink at the breakfast club for vulnerable kids as 60% were on free school meals and didn't even have a drink until lunch time but were coming in to use the gym facilities at 8am. We would have liked to get muesli bars/non-perishables to give to them after their morning exercise session."

Active Partnerships and The Consortium

Both local Active Partnerships and the consortium are involved in the supporting of the delivery of OSF funding, and we wanted to understand:

To what extent has OSF tackled inequalities across each Active Partnership area?

To what extent have Active Partnerships successfully linked OSF to other key priorities and programmes to achieve even greater impact and added value, such as HAF, place-based projects or embedding the Active Lives Survey?

To what extent has the Active Partnership Network successfully managed the delivery of OSF?

To what extent have UKactive, Street Games and YST supported Active Partnerships and schools with meeting the aims of OSF and the evaluation of OSF?

The outcomes we were expecting were:

- OSF as a driver for tackling inequalities in an Active Partnership area
- OSF successfully linked with other key priorities to achieve even greater impact and added value
- Consortium successfully managed the delivery of OSF
- Consortium successfully supporting Active Partnerships and schools with meeting the aims of OSF and the evaluation of OSF

The extent to which Active Partnerships and the consortium have achieved these outcomes is less easily measurable than the outcomes of participants and schools. However, we can reflect here on to what extent it feels they have been achieved so far.

The consortium's main aim is to **successfully manage the delivery of OSF**. Consortium partners have undertaken various roles in support of the programme to achieve this, including engagement with National Governing Bodies (NGBs), and other sector partners, information sharing with School Business Managers, Evaluation, Youth Voice and workforce development opportunities. The overall delivery of the programme has been led by the APNO who have continually developed and refined processes to ensure targets within the contract have been met.

The consortium has also taken great strides in **supporting Active Partnerships and schools with the delivery of OSF**. They have pulled together relevant policies and processes, have provided guidance documents and organised biweekly calls with the network to enable the sharing of information as well as the sharing of good practice. Support has been put in place to assist the collection of data, for example participation, target groups and types of activities and evidence of spends.

There has been additional support around Evaluation, with a Monitoring Evaluation Learning (MEL) framework in place which the Active Partnerships and the schools can use to measure success and identify any barriers or any changes that may be needed. This MEL framework supports the work ukactive are delivering as part of their role. Training has also been delivered across the network, such as webinars on Youth Voice, and training in schools, to help to understand the needs of young people and to develop skills for the future supporting the sustainability of the programme.

Across Active Partnerships, we have seen how OSF has played an important role in helping to **tackle inequalities within local areas**, catalysing broader community engagement and support through its programme initiatives. Active Partnerships have been actively supporting schools to focus on target groups; girls, free school meals, ethnically diverse communities and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). One way in which Active Partnerships have added value, and been better able to support the focus on target groups, is through their **alignment with other programmes** such as

Holiday Activities Food programme (HAF), Creating Active Schools (CAS) and School Games, and where we have seen the most impact is when collaboration is taking place with local partnerships.

Unexpected outcomes

Alongside these expected outcomes, we have witnessed some **unexpected outcomes** emerge for both the consortium and Active Partnerships. We've overachieved on the participation and engagement from both children and young people and community users. In addition to this, we have embedded thinking and frameworks that has been occurring nationally, and locally, feed into the OSF work across the consortium and Active Partnerships. For example, the new Physical Literacy consensus statement and placed based approaches.

The place-based approach has come to the forefront of thinking for many, and we have know various OSF projects are linked to local priorities/initiatives, these examples can be found in the successes section. Not only this, but the data showing on the IDACI results gives a good indication that as a network we have targeted the correct schools and local priorities and that we have had a positive impact on the schools selected.

Local Active Partnerships have played a role of connecting and collaborating in their local areas, and many have delivered local conferences to achieve this. This has been a chance for schools to come together, share good practice, discuss barriers and look at their future delivery plans. Not only this, but consortium members have achieved greater connectivity, providing added value to the programme and future collaboration on opportunities for Children and Young People.

Summary of the impact of Year 2 of OSF

As shown above, Year 2 of the OSF programme has been hugely successful, with many of the expected outcomes of participants, schools, Active Partnerships and the Consortium well on their way to being achieved. Not only that, we have seen some positive unexpected outcomes occur, such as positive experiences for carers of dependents, the ability for schools to be flexible and innovative, and thinking around Physical Literacy and place-based approaches feeding in. All of this is a positive, and exciting, start to Year 3.

Learning so far

In this section we have outlined the learnings from the first two years of the Opening School Facilities programme. We explore this by delving into the enablers for success, barriers to success, and learning and changes to take forward into year three.

Enablers for success

There are four key enablers described by Active Partnerships that led to successful implementation and achievement of outcomes.

1. Engaging with the 'right' people in school makes the difference
2. Partnership and collaboration
3. Connecting to the whole / seeing the bigger picture to ensure greater success and enables wider opportunities
4. Involving Children and Young People and creating Young Leaders

Enabler 1 - Engaging with the 'right' people in school makes the difference

The success of OSF projects within schools has often been attributed to finding the right people to be involved. The definition of "right" was different for different Active Partnerships, and indeed, schools, however, some themes emerged.

Schools that have been most successful at implementing OSF projects have:

1. **People who are passionate about physical activity:** Often success is dependent on the passion, motivation, enthusiasm and or capacity of the project lead at a school
2. **People who have influence and/or decision-making authority:** *"SLT and business manager support is crucial for the project lead to ensure the project / process doesn't breakdown."
(GM Moving)*
3. **People who think about OSF as part of the bigger picture:** A project lead who has a vision for physical activity, and sees OSF as a small piece of the jigsaw, not just a standalone project
4. **Acknowledged that it's not always the case that one person could encapsulate all of the above,** and therefore multiple people have been involved. For example, SLT, community lead, PE lead, non-PE staff etc.
5. **Role models who have positive relationships with targeted students,** for example teaching assistants and the pastoral care team.

There was also an acknowledgement that the project lead didn't always need to be the PE lead, and in fact, in many cases, that would not work. The big enabler is not always the person you would expect, it could be SLT, facilities managers, pastoral teams, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

As part of the consortium, StreetGames have been supporting with ensuring the right people are skilled in supporting with OSF through their workforce offer. A workforce offer was developed for both schools and Active Partnerships, to upskill both deliverers and Active Partnership staff on wider CYP issues, including Advertise Childhood Experiences (ACES) and Trauma Informed Practice, [Understanding Young People from Underserved Communities and Keeping Young People Safe in Community Sport](#). In total 53 places were utilised for these sessions.

Enabler 2 - Partnership and collaboration

Partnership and collaboration have been key enablers through all strands of OSF, from the consortium all the way to community groups and participants. For many Active Partnerships, OSF has been an opportunity to strengthen, as well as cement the already strong, relationships and partnerships that exist in local systems. There are different levels to this: OSF has helped strengthen

local relationships, not just at an Active Partnership level with local councils, schools and public health, but also between schools and the community. There is a real sense of strategic partners working together to drive OSF, and schools and community groups being included as strategic partners in their own right.

Examples include:

- OSF has been an opportunity to connect schools in with local partners and other areas of work which align with their priorities
- Joined up partnership working - helped join a lot of dots and has boosted relationships with SGOs and AP
- Connecting the right community partners for delivery - strengthening of relationships with children and parents for pathway
- Bringing groups together. Secondary schools with alternative provider are now speaking to each other re joint OSF application
- Two-way relationships with schools are so much better. APs are in a position to be able to challenge schools more in a productive way
- Success in the community often dependent on if the school has historical/existing partners

Case Study: Think Active CSW

Through Year 2 of OSF our Partnership team have been keen to utilise this programme to prioritise reaching our priority people and priority places.

In Coventry we have a new collaborative group of partners who have been coming together around shared priorities. This group contains representatives from the local authority (education, sports and public health teams), Streetgames, CV Life (leisure and delivery provider), the Integrated care board, Coventry Outdoor Partnership, West Midlands Police, Youth deliverers and locally trusted organisations. We meet regularly with the LA education, sports development and public health teams where we do a sense-check of our hit list, and new ones are targeted for engagement. This group also have a grasp of the local scene and other initiatives that we are able to help align, in order to maximise potential growth of our community sustainability and activation.

Case Study: GM Moving

Within Greater Manchester, with the OSF funding, we have used a place-based approach to working with schools across the ten boroughs. Models linked to facility investment, mapping and capacity vary in areas. However, there's a common theme that we are supporting local partners with a layered approach to sites/ areas activity. This works by ensuring communication with key partners and schools sharing opportunities/connections/investment. Examples of this include; FA Grass pitch investment, HAF, Local pilot, Playzones, CAS, Sport England Crowdfunding to name a few.

The aim is to widen impact on the community. The aspiration is that school sites are recognised as community assets which many school leaders want to be the case for their pupils, families and local communities. This may include social prescribing activity from local GP, sessions to support mental wellbeing of parents, safe places for conversations, a warm meal, debt advice – with an added layer of moving whilst there, learning a new skill, volunteering etc.

Schools often crave the support and connectivity to the community groups/clubs and connecting groups together has strengthened many projects. Other partners, such as Parkplay, Swim England, Balanceabilty, Kin Ball UK, provide the bespoke offer following consultation from the school, to ensure that the activities the pupils and community want can be delivered.

Enabler 3 - Connecting to the whole / seeing the bigger picture to ensure greater success and enables wider opportunities

By seeing OSF not just as a stand-alone project, but as a piece of the jigsaw puzzle, schools and Active Partnerships have been able to explore wider opportunities and see even greater outcomes for the schools and participants they are supporting.

We've seen connections across three key areas: with **other programmes and work that Active Partnerships** engage with schools on, **connecting with other parts of the system** (e.g. health) and **connecting with the work of National Governing Bodies (NGBs)**.

Other programmes and work that Active Partnerships engage with schools on

OSF has enabled schools to further understand the benefits of physical activity to support wider outcomes through the programme, for example, behaviour and wellbeing, and this has raised the profile of physical activity more generally. We have seen this through the wide range of areas in which OSF has been linked with, particularly focused on schools, including School Games, Creating Active Schools, HAF and warm spaces funding.

Some Active Partnerships have found joining OSF with other programmes / work strands has enabled them to better support some groups of people that face greater inequalities: A school in North Yorkshire that has 100% free school meal children is now involved in a variety of projects that are supporting those children to be more active, including HAF, creating active schools, and hosting level four wellbeing through PE and School Games.

The case study below from two schools in Somerset demonstrates the impact of linking OSF and Warm Hubs funding to those children who were typically less engaged with physical activity and school more generally.

Case study: Warm Hubs in Somerset

The Warm Hub funding originated from Somerset Council and along with other bodies within the County, SASP were tasked with distributing this funding, in particular encouraging clubs and organisations connected with sport and activity to create warm and welcoming spaces for people to find sanctuary and social engagement. All schools in the county, not just OSF schools were invited to apply. The majority of OSF Schools did not apply, the feeling being among many that they had already put themselves "out there" by engaging with OSF and taking this on might expose them to even more administration and organisational stress.

However, two schools that had set great store in Breakfast Club projects both applied. Both schools served areas of very high deprivation, and both had noted, pre OSF, that many young people arrived at school very early and simply hung around and as such were often prone to "distraction". Both schools planned sports hall (along with outdoor spaces in appropriate times and weather) based informal clubs where pupils could turn up and with "light touch" supervision and organisation, take part in recreational level activities. Whilst the OSF funding could fund equipment and supervision, food was not possible. The warm hub funding could however be used, so both schools were able to offer very simple but wholesome foods such as croissants, crumpets, toast and cereals along with tea and coffee.

By keeping it simple and low cost, it was easy to administer (both schools managed to engage at least one person with a food hygiene qualification and experience) and also to spread the funding over a longer period of time. When the food and drink was introduced around November both schools noticed increased daily engagement, with many "irregular" attenders becoming much more consistent. They also noted that social outcomes were much enhanced, with youngsters more able to

interact with the whole group rather than remaining in small silos that often didn't mingle. As yet no serious evaluation has taken place regarding outcomes such as improved attendance, behaviour or attainment but anecdotally all seem to have been positively influenced.

Some Active Partnerships have found that linking across programmes has enabled them to provide a greater offer of support across their schools: Active Humber has linked OSF into some of its other Active Partnership programmes and work such as School Games and Creating Active Schools (CAS), and a professional development programme that supports schools to create happy and healthy environments through physical activity. The case study below shows how North Yorkshire Sport have also linked OSF with School Games and CAS, and the opportunities this has provided for them.

Case study: North Yorkshire Sport and Westfield Community Primary School using Creating Active Schools

North Yorkshire Sport (NYS) and Westfield Community Primary School in York have been able to forge a strong relationship with senior leaders using OSF. As conversations developed, we discussed how Westfield provide FSM for 100% of their pupils and how they would like to ensure that pupil health and wellbeing is provided for beyond the school day and during the school holidays.

This naturally led us to consider how the Creating Active Schools (CAS) framework professional development tool would land within Westfield. After introducing the framework to senior leaders it was clear to see that this was the exact type of support and knowledge sharing that senior leaders were looking for in terms of a whole school approach to physical health and wellbeing. After arranging a CAS onboarding meeting we were able to discuss the school's current provision, barriers and focus areas for the future. This dovetailed nicely into the second session in which we were able to carry out the CAS profile and produce a planning for change action plan.

*Considering this we discussed the possibilities of how each government programme (OSF, School Games and HAF) could contribute to the senior leader's vision. The following areas of the CAS framework underpinned the planning phase and the following actions were agreed upon; **Policy** – Revisit the school PE policy to consider physical activity and wellbeing more broadly, **Stakeholders** – Consider staff and pupil voice around improvements for health and wellbeing-based provision in school, **Environments**- How can the entire school environment be better utilised to promote PA/Sport/Wellbeing both during the academic year and beyond.*

*In addition, **opportunities** were identified with School Games links and HAF links: School Games link: Tackling Inequality, Youth Engagement, Physical Literacy; HAF link: Westfield are eager to offer their site a safe space and community hub for physical activity, play and sport during the school holidays.*

Connecting with other parts of the system

Like many Active Partnerships, Active Dorset provides detailed insight on how they are ensuring the sustainability of OSF continues post end date by not only linking OSF to other existing programmes of work, but also exploring wider opportunities with other local partners once the programme ends. For example, OSF recognised by other system partners, and referenced in the ICB joint forward plan - <https://nhsdorset.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Joint-Forward-Plan.pdf>

Over and above this, OSF has been an opportunity for some to work with health partners, including public health and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). Examples of this have been in Kent & Medway Active Partnership, where they are in the pilot stage of a project working with health partners and senior leaders on specific mental health intervention. They have worked together to put on additional sessions designed to support the mental wellbeing of young people specifically identified

by pastoral/wellbeing leads and/or SENCOs. Next steps will be to conduct follow ups in transition and the behaviour projects.

Case study: Linking with mental health practitioners in Active Humber

Active Humber has been linking into mental health practitioners in some schools to identify those students who don't engage in school PE, have low confidence and need additional support.

Through work with Hull City Council's Public Health team (linked to supporting a physical activity offer for all young people across the different communities of Hull), OSF leads and the Early Help team for Education, the AP was asked to develop mental health specific work in a targeted school. This work is in conjunction with the pilot which is running across schools in Hull where there are 35 schools and colleges who have mental health support teams delivering support to over 18,000 students with mild to moderate mental health problems, as well as providing support to parent/carers and school staff.

The AP linked them in with a yoga instructor who specialises in working with young people with special educational needs and trauma informed approaches. The mental health practitioners have been responsible for identifying the participants – mainly females in years 9/10 who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- *Girls who purposely don't attend school on the days they have PE*
- *Girls low in confidence*
- *Exam stress*
- *Young people who are known to have disruptive home lives*

Connecting with the work of National Governing Bodies (NGBs)

As part of the programme, links have been further established between National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and the consortium's organisations. This has resulted in 14 NGBs contributing to offers and the identification of local clubs needing facilities which have been shared with local APs and their schools.

Detailed examples of how NGBs are linking directly to the programme -

NGB	Support	Outcomes
The FA	Provided information on the schools who are part of the programme, and breakdown on those who have a focus on Football	Two outcomes - been able to provide exit routes for the school provision, CPD opportunities etc. Guidance on girl's football. Sharing information to local clubs in regard to facilities that could be available to them.
Swim England	Provided support around delivery plans, pulled out key themes, which they then delivered workshops to schools on	Schools reaching out to regional leads for further support on the upkeep of the pools. Helped to link in swim providers too.
Rounders England	Support needed for the NGB for their priority areas to help gain access to venues.	Venues identified in some of their priority areas, venues from OSF schools, which has led to leagues being set up and expanded.

Chance to Shine	Webinar with their regional Cricket County Boards and sharing of AP leads	Connection with APs around projects and venue access to some of the schools involved. Providing details of APs in certain areas
British Fencing	Providing information and links to special schools across the county	Working with both OSF primary & secondary schools on their We Are Forging Futures programme. Provided support around equipment.
British Tennis	Shared information on schools and those who have focus on Tennis	Tennis has provided guidance to those schools on what the funding can be spent on to help improve the provision for tennis, and promoting other funding streams that could support things that OSF cannot.
British Weightlifting	Sharing of AP details, also schools who have projects focusing on both weightlifting and gym	Looking to provide support to schools around qualifications and upskilling of staff and students to enable them to run sessions. Links to the Raise the Bar programme.
Other	Conversations with rugby league, netball, athletics, gymnastics and basketball	

Enabler 4 - Involving Children and Young People and creating Young Leaders

Core to the success of many OSF projects was the involvement of children and young people in the design and development of projects, as well as the delivery.

Youth Voice with Street Games

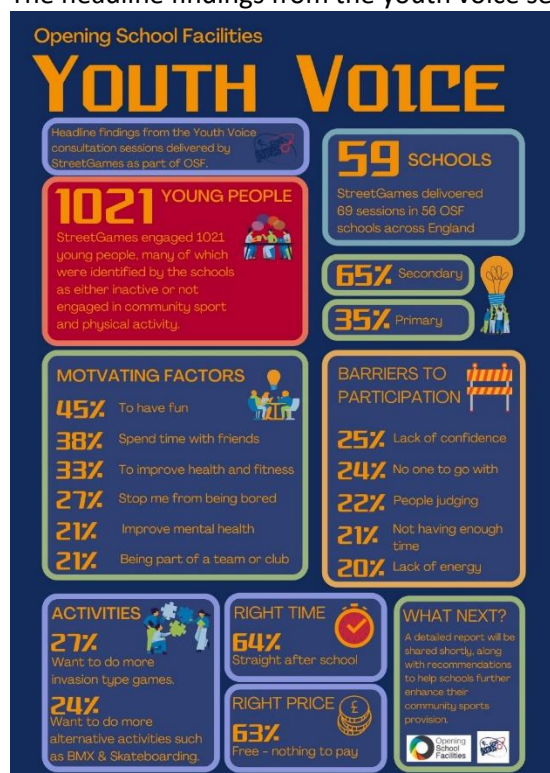
The consortium are committed to ensuring youth voice as an underlying principle of the programme to understand the needs and desires of the young people to maximise the investment, this has been led by StreetGames.

Following StreetGames' support to a small number of Active Partnerships in Year 1, including youth voice training for schools in partnership with the Youth Sport Trust, the offer was opened to the wider Active Partnership network for Year 2. This work has been linked to the Lundy model, developed by Professor Laura Lundy.³

The youth voice consultation sessions were delivered by experienced StreetGames staff, delivering the sessions directly to young people in their school setting. The sessions targeted young people who were identified by the schools as inactive or not engaged in community sport. The sessions were designed to be engaging, inclusive and relevant for all young people participating. A well-considered standardisation process was implemented to ensure that all data captured could be collated effectively.

³ The Lundy model has been used to transform the ways in which the views and experiences of children across the world are heard at the United Nations, to not only ensure that children's voices are heard but to ensure that children and young people are able to influence and have their views acted upon.

The headline findings from the youth voice sessions are detailed in the infographic⁴.



It is important to stress that this insight was gathered from young people who were identified as inactive, not engaged or similar. The findings from the report suggest that the community sports offer available for these young people should consider the **right time**, the **right style** and the **right people**.

64% of the young people identified that the activity being at the **right time** was important to them, whilst 45% of the young people feedback that having fun was the most important part of these sessions, which suggests **right style** is very important. To deliver the right style of sessions, it is imperative that the **right people** are utilised, this links directly with both the community connectivity work linking with established community organisations who deliver in the style required by the young people and through the workforce development opportunities.

This insight has been important to share with schools and Active Partnerships, for them to consider their plans for delivery for Year 3 of OSF, as well as their other delivery to children and young people outside of this programme.

Other ways of involving children and young people

On top of the youth voice insight from Street Games, some OSF projects have already embedded the thoughts and opinions of their young people in their work, acting upon them within their delivery plans.

For example, Kent and Medway Active Partnership made it mandatory for schools to complete their consultation survey with their students. They then stipulated at least three activities voted for by the

⁴ The full insight report will be available for use across the wider networks, from July 2024.

least active groups had to be included in delivery plans. The OSF survey consultation was adapted from their youth led pilot Positive Activities for Young People Investment programme in 2022. They now have a Youth Voice [webpage](#) which captures the learnings from that consultation and the subsequent 18-week pilot programmes, and now, the OSF consultation they have data from.

Leap, the Active Partnership for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, uses community deliverers who understand and engage with young people, through linking with First Class Athletics. This has shown to have a positive impact on the attendance of students engaging in the programme, 30-40 girls regularly attending and with an excellent retention rate. This is due to how instrumental the two coaches from the club were to the success of the session. They had an excellent rapport with the young people and built the session around the differing abilities of all the young people to ensure that they could all get a sense of achievement from the session.

Many Active Partnerships described how OSF was used as a vehicle for training young leaders and giving them the opportunity to deliver sessions both within their school, and across other local schools. This has enabled many successes, including increasing the local coaching workforce (Think Active CSW) and ensuring the sustainability of projects (e.g. secondary school leaders are now delivering in six local primary feeder schools to support OSF delivery – Think Active CSW; Young leaders leading Women’s Football in Frome College – SASP, engagement of schools with sustainability and young leader training – Kent & Medway).

Summary of the enablers for success

When exploring the impact of Year 2 of OSF, it was clear that four enablers to success really stood out:

- The right people make the difference
- Partnership and collaboration
- Connecting to the whole
- Involving Children and Young People

We’ve seen how much of this is related to **people**: engage with those you are trying to support, get the right mix of people involved in development and delivery, and importantly partnering and collaborating together, and focusing on the bigger picture, and you are ready for success.

Barriers to success

The success of OSF is clear to see, however we have provided a detailed analysis of some of the barriers which have been highlighted during Year 1 and Year 2, to help us to ensure even greater success during Year 3 of the programme.

Upon reflection and discussion as a consortium, and with participants, schools and Active Partnerships, the following barriers to success have been identified:

1. Programme processes are causing barriers
2. Unable to use funds for capital spend
3. Staffing issues within schools
4. Fully engaging with the community offer

Programme processes are causing barriers

One of the most noted barriers to success for the consortium, Active Partnerships and schools was the processes that are in place for OSF, and how some of these had led to barriers that could have been avoided.

“I only have a certain amount of time, and a) it was very complicated and b) it was very time consuming” (PE lead, primary school, Sheffield)

In comparison to Phase 1 and 2 of the OSF programme, schools and Active Partnerships noted that the following processes have been particularly challenging: **the amount and type of data collected; the way evidence of spend are raised; timings of the funding and on-going deadlines.**

This impact of OSF being admin heavy was flagged in the **consortium ripple effect map**. This highlighted some frustration and confusion for Active Partnerships in addition to the capacity of individuals being stretched, because of large workloads, and therefore meaning they were “doing what they can in the time available.” This meant that conversations and resources were potentially drawn away from what was important, and the delivery plans may not have been as successful.

The impact of the admin, at the school level, was also noted. Some schools were reluctant to engage in OSF because of the admin involved: of concern was the requirement to claim money back retrospectively, where some feared getting this wrong and not getting the money back.

For those that did choose to participate in OSF, some have struggled with the funding running in line with the financial year rather than academic year, particularly with submitting their evidence of spend on time. This has put time pressure on the network and has made it difficult towards the end of the year to provide accurate financial reporting estimations to the Department for Education. It has also caused large amounts of evidence of spend to be processed towards the back end of the financial year which has meant a large accrual was needed in April and May.

This theme may link back to the previously mentioned enabler for success of having the right people involved in the project. When speaking to school staff, particularly those involved in day-to-day teaching, they flagged the burden of having to complete the required admin, on top of their teaching responsibilities.

Finding the time to do this often proved difficult. Once again, this highlights why it may be important to have more than one individual at a school sharing the responsibility for OSF. In contrast, when

administrative staff/business managers had a hand in assisting with OSF, they mentioned that the spreadsheets and submitting the data has been a smooth and straightforward process.

Overcoming this barrier

To overcome this, we are sharing the good practice from those areas that are working with schools to engage with more than one person on the OSF programme and how this is working. Active Partnerships are looking to host conferences and webinars to enable sharing of how staff internally can work together.

The School Business Managers webinars led by the Youth Sport Trust will be supporting schools to be more efficient to reduce the capacity on the programme in Year 3. For example, the use of booking systems, sharing of policies and procedures for the community setting, engagements with MATs for further support.

Timings and on-going deadlines

The programme launch was delayed, which meant that year one was not a full year. This has wide-ranging impacts on the behaviours of Active Partnerships and Schools, and the amount of admin involved.

Ripple effect mapping with the consortium clearly highlighted the impact of delays to launch the programme, particularly due to the contract not being signed when this was anticipated. Ripples of this event suggested that there was a rush to sign up schools in eight weeks and an urgency to spend money. This led to using solicited/targeted design to sign up schools, with some Active Partnerships approaching the “lowest hanging fruit” to engage in OSF.

Once schools were selected, many felt they had limited time available for designing and developing delivery plans. Active Partnerships struggled to get communication about community use across to schools and community involvement was not at the heart of the discussions, which led to limited community plans in Year 1.

The fast-paced nature of the start of the programme, meant there was also little time to get schools comfortable with collecting participation data, and we have seen noticeable struggles with collection, including community data being hard to capture due to teachers not being present on site at the time of delivery.

The impact of these ripples has been a focus on smaller wins rather than longer term sustainability, which we are still seeing the effects of in Year 2. Additionally, because year one was not a full year, the programme is closer to two full years than three, which makes it harder to make some projects sustainable for Active Partnerships and schools.

Due to the main measurements of the contract being throughput participation numbers and number of activities delivered over a 12-week period, coupled with the limitations for spend on small capital alterations, it has encouraged short term activity rather than long term system change. Whilst there has been a significant amount of high-quality delivery, concerns are held over the sustainability of some of the activities when this funding cycle comes to an end.

Overcoming this barrier

As a Consortium, we have been able to give Active Partnerships and schools more time to shape their Year 3 delivery plans than in previous years of the programme. Active Partnerships have already started conversations with their existing schools and any new schools that may be joining around their Year 3 plans, and ensuring a community project is part of their plans.

We have also put extra deadlines in earlier in Year 3 to capture the data to ensure if further support around the community engagement is needed, we have the time to put it in place.

Unable to use funds for capital spend

Due to the nature of the OSF funding, schools are not able to use their funds for any type of capital spend. This exempts Swimming Pool projects, as any spend that is new or extends what the school currently offers for swimming can be funded. E.g. if a swimming pool is opened for an extra hour (1pm – 2pm) all costs incurred to use this facility will be covered in the spend – refurbishments of the pool, heating, as well as a lifeguards, equipment etc.

Across the network, many schools have seen a detrimental effect of not being able to use their funds for capital spend. In many cases, the capital spend was small, but would have had a huge impact on the people they were targeting, particularly those facing particular inequalities. For example, a school in Yorkshire were unable to buy disabled access ramp for £4,000, which would have allowed disabled access to their facilities.

In other cases, it has created more work and inconvenience for the school, such as the inability to put in fixed lighting in outdoor spaces. This has led to a school supported by Wesport to purchase temporary lights, which they must wheel in and out of the space daily and must provide storage for when they are not in use.

For some, it has limited their ability to open up their facilities for community use. For example, several schools would have liked to change positions of entrance doors or add new ones to allow community access to parts of the school, whilst others were not able to fund a fence to separate outdoor facilities to allow for a safe space for community use.

The requirement to use money on capital spends was flagged as important by many schools and Active Partnerships. Data to capture this need was undertaken and questions on this topic are included in Year 3 Delivery Plans.

Overcoming this barrier

Unfortunately this is not a barrier we are able to overcome, without rethinking the design of OSF. It will be critical to consider if OSF were to be funded in the future.

Staffing issues within schools

As mentioned in the enablers for success section above, people are key to the success of OSF. However, some Active Partnerships have experienced issues with staffing, across various levels, which has meant that some projects have not been as successful as they would have hoped.

There is a sense across the board that staff at schools are overwhelmed at the moment, and therefore can be difficult to engage with on, what is often seen as, “another project for them to do”. Some do not have the time or capacity to fully engage, which can mean they do the bare minimum, or are unable to spend the OSF funding in the allotted time. In addition, in some cases it is known that business managers and finance managers do not see OSF as a priority, and therefore do not engage well.

There has been a concern around the community offer element of OSF, and for many schools, there being no clear leader for this piece of work. For example, there is, in some cases, no one responsible for community engagement at the school. In others we have seen the Senior Leadership team actively block the idea of community use.

In some cases, where there is buy in for the community offer, it can be a challenge to find the right resources out in the community – for example the timings are limited for when the school can open up to community use, and there is limited resource available in the community to fill those slots, or there is lack of demand for casual hours / out of hours timings.

Overcoming this barrier

Whilst we are fully aware of the capacity issues within schools at the present time, it is not something we can address specifically as part of the OSF programme. However, where possible we are sharing examples of good practice across the network, including how to get the right people at schools involved in OSF, and how to support them with admin.

In addition, the Consortium will be upskilling staff across the network. Youth Sport Trust will be upskilling business support managers as part of their offer in Year 3. The StreetGames workforce offer will develop all people who are delivering community sports and physical activity provision through OSF in Year 3. This offer will enable us to create a sustainable legacy that will enable schools to plan and deliver an offer that is right for all young people, for many years to come.

Fully engaging with the community offer

As mentioned previously, some of the reasons behind not fully being able to realise the community offer were due to the processes and timing at the start of the programme, the effects of which we are still seeing in Year 2. However, we are also seeing additional reasons why schools have struggled to fully realise the community offer, outlined below.

Staffing

This points to the fact that there are some specific reasons around staffing which make the community offer difficult to fully realise:

1. **It's no-one's role to be responsible for community engagement:** some schools do not have a member of staff responsible for community engagement, which means it is not a priority as part of their offer.
2. **There is a skills gap:** even if you have staff who are keen to engage their community, they may not have the right skill set (yet). Many teachers are skilled in teaching, not in community development and engaging their community in using their facilities. The focus needs to shift to enabling schools to deliver community focused programmes, however this requires capacity improvements and knowledge building of community work.

3. **Inability to use funding to pay teachers:** For small schools in rural areas, availability of coaches is very limited, and often teachers would be able to fill the gap. However, they are not allowed to be funded through OSF in this way.

Access to facilities

One barrier to this was access to toilets / changing facilities because this would mean that the whole school would need to be open. Some examples provided included being able to add access doors, to enable a community entrance and not have to open up the rest of the school. It's frustrating as otherwise schools would be more willing to open up to the community, but understandably they don't want to allow access to the whole school out of hours. - Wesport

Teachers have acknowledged that it is important for a school to play a role in the community and offer itself as a hub but have flagged that getting this right is essential and needs to be done in a careful and considered way to ensure the safety and success of such endeavours.

"Late at night, dark nights, people coming and going - It needs a lot of thought, for people to feel safe and enjoy being part of provision. It's a big exercise – it's a position and a post, I don't think it can be a bolt on. It's got to be part of somebody's role. You would need a strong individual onsite, due to the nature of where the school is situated. It could become a difficult situation for a member of staff, it could entice people onto the school site who we don't want on the school site. When you do it, it's got to be absolutely right, and you don't want to go into half hearted. We didn't want to spend all that money on that, and it not work. We didn't want it to disrupt the children's progress, who are from the community." Sports and after school provision lead, Primary school, Middlesbrough

Aligned funding

On top of staffing, there are other key reasons why the community offer may be difficult for schools to implement. Some Active Partnerships felt that there was a gap in funding to support free school meals children (FSM) to access community clubs if they want to do more outside of school. For example, they may have fallen in love with an activity at school but can't access community provision due to higher costs or other barriers they may face (e.g. transport). There was also an acknowledgement that many of these children may need to be provided with a food and drink offering. If FSM children are being more active but aren't fuelling this increased activity properly, this could be detrimental for their energy levels.

Overcoming this barrier

Whilst some elements of this challenge are out of the control of the Consortium and Active Partnerships, and even schools, some elements we have been able to address to mitigate it's effect in Year 3.

We have identified that the staffing issues faced by schools are an area Youth Sport Trust can support with in Year 3 through business manager training, for example specifically around saving time on admin and upskilling staff. In addition, StreetGames are delivering support and training for schools on how to engage their community.

Summary of the barriers to success

Whilst Year 2 has been a successful year for OSF, we have faced some barriers to ensuring it's full potential. These were identified as:

- Processes putting up unnecessary barriers
- Unable to use funds for Capital spend
- Staffing issues
- Not able to fully realise the community offer

As noted above, in most cases we are already exploring ways across the network to overcome these barriers, and will continue to do so throughout Year 3.

Summary – and changes to year 3

As a collective working on OSF, there is a strong desire to take the learnings from the successes and challenges and make improvements for Year 3. We are seeing the consortium, Active Partnerships, and schools all doubling down on the successes of the first two years and learning from the challenges they have faced.

Some changes that are being made in Year 3 by Active Partnerships and the consortium are:

Shifting the focus to evaluation, community use and sustainability

The consortium and Active Partnerships have taken the learning from years 1 and 2 of the OSF programme and have begun to shift the focus of year 3 towards evaluation, community use and sustainability. Keyways in which they are enacting this change are to (i) put in place tighter criteria for Year 3 plans for schools, (ii) putting more resource and effort into undertaking the evaluation; and (iii) providing additional support around community use and sustainability.

Many Active Partnerships have adapted their criteria for Year 3 plans based on the need to re-focus on evaluation, community use and sustainability, and they have been supported by the consortium who have added and amended questions on the community and sustainability areas, to help schools better understand what is being asked from them.

For example, Wesport is asking each school to submit a mini case study with their Year 3 delivery plans, whilst North Yorkshire Sport are stipulating that Year 3 applications need at least one community project to be successful. Another Active Partnership is requiring each school to have at least two after school clubs that extend into community accessible sessions.

As noted previously, Active Partnerships have reflected on the impact of the admin burden on their ability to undertake the evaluation aspects of the OSF programme, but also realise the importance of understanding the positive impact of OSF. Many have begun to put in place more resource and capability into their local evaluations, including planning more project visits and case studies, and linking in with other colleagues who could provide support.

For a number of reasons mentioned above, it has been more difficult for schools to deliver projects focused on community use and / or sustainability. This is something that Active Partnerships are very aware of and are keen to change. Whilst some have focused on tighter criteria around year 3 plans, others are providing additional support for schools to help them to think about these topics, such as webinars for schools each term and conferences bringing schools together to discuss learning and share ideas.

Some Active Partnerships are already seeing the impact of these changes.

“Year 3 schools really seem to ‘get’ OSF now. Year 3 applications are so much stronger and innovative than Year 2” Think Active

Easing the admin burden

Both the consortium and Active Partnerships are working hard to ease the admin burden on both themselves, and the schools they are supporting. This has included a review of the deadlines and processes involved in the submission of delivery plans, evidence of spend and participation data, with the following actions being agreed by the consortium:

- Deadlines for submissions for delivery plans and pre-delivery evidence of spends have been brought forward, with regular check in points around schools' spends.
- Streamlining processes around evidence of spend submissions and capturing of data as much as possible, while still delivering on the KPI's from the funders.
- Providing School Business managers webinar support during Year 3, to help ease the admin burden.
- In year 2 the consortium changed the way they were capturing the participation data from schools to enable a smoother process, which they worked with the network to support the simpler process.

In addition to this, some Active Partnerships are providing additional support and guidance for schools when submitting their delivery plans and evidence of spend. This has included more engagement around delivery plans, stricter criteria on what is to be included in delivery plans and clearer processes and timings for submitting evidence of spend.

Enabling a greater community offer

Core to the success of Year 3 of OSF is to ensure the community offer can be as impactful as possible.

StreetGames are supporting with this through the community connectivity offer, understanding the needs of the community, both from a young person's and a locally trusted organisation (LTO) perspective, and connecting schools and community organisations to provide a varied experience for the young people. To do this more effectively they will align the OSF schools with the StreetGames network offering Doorstep Sport⁵.

In addition to this offer, we are already seeing examples from schools and Active Partnerships to support with enabling a greater community offer. For example, using pre-packages to help schools spend funds including capacity for deliverers to get community programmes running, and running coach/instructor surveys to ascertain where there is desire to link with schools.

Doubling down on the successes

There have been many successes from the first two years of the OSF programme, and across the board the consortium and Active Partnerships are keen to build on these. StreetGames will use Year 3 to ensure that youth voice is engrained in the programme, and further support will be provided in year 3 to schools and community organisations in the form of workshops. This will allow deeper understanding of the youth voice findings carried out in Year 2 and enable local activation on the back of this.

We have reflected that relationships, partnerships and collaboration have been core to the success of many projects, and Active Partnerships are seeking to deepen these relationships to further develop the impact of OSF.

Examples include using different ways to build relationships with schools, via different colleagues within Active Partnerships and within schools, away from the more obvious contacts (PE leads) towards more strategic relationships (Senior Leadership Team, Business Support Manager,

⁵ Doorstep Sport, a tried and tested methodology for engaging young people in underserved communities in sport and physical activity, ensuring that sport is delivered in a way that is enjoyable and accessible to young people in these communities.

Community Lead; encouraging collaboration and shared learning across schools through mechanisms such as face-to-face conferences and learning events; and fostering joined up working across different programmes led, or delivered by, Active Partnerships.

Delivered by:



Funded by:

