

Youth Sport Trust  
Active Recovery Curriculum



*spear* Evaluation Report  
August 2021

## About *spear*

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

The Centre's research is funded by a range of national and international funders such as the International Olympic Committee, World Health Organisation, Terre des Hommes, Department of Health, Department for Education, Youth Sport Trust, Chance to Shine, Premiership Rugby, Sport Birmingham, parkrun UK and Sport England. Recent work has focused on sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing in schools and communities.

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

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Active Recovery Curriculums evaluation undertaken by *spear* and commissioned by Youth Sport Trust. Report produced by *spear*

August 2021



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# Context

## About Active Recovery Curriculum

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges within education for schools, teachers, pupils and parents. Despite well-established benefits of physical activity on mental and physical health for young people, throughout the UK, children and young people reported being less active during periods of lockdown.

The Youth Sport Trust's (YST) 'Active Recovery Curriculum' (ARC: defined as the prioritisation of physical activity and time outdoors) aims to super-charge recovery speed and outcomes for young people following the pandemic. Sport England and the YST are promoting ARCs in association with National Governing Bodies, charities and associated organisations. Schools, local authorities and families are also supported through a National Lottery funded 'Active Recovery Hub' which sits on the School Games website and comprises free, accessible resources.

Schools and teachers fostering an ARC have worked reactively to meet the unique developmental needs of their pupils and address specific shortfalls in pupil experiences during the pandemic. As such, ARCs and their specific impacts are wide ranging, yet the overarching focus has been prioritising time spent being active or outdoors during the school day with an aim to help reinstate routines, structure, social relationships and academic engagement to improve upon physical and mental health and academic outcomes. ARCs have been implemented in some schools throughout the pandemic, however this research focuses on the application and impact of ARCs since the return to structured schooling on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

## About *spear*'s evaluation

*spear* was commissioned from May to August 2021 to conduct an independent evaluation of ARC. The evaluation is designed to capture multiple perspectives of impact and highlight key lessons learned which may be applied to future programmes. This report focuses on how ARCs have been adopted in schools, and the impact they have had on various aspects of young peoples' wellbeing and development following disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data informing this report are drawn from quantitative and qualitative sources. Survey responses were collected following one term of ARC delivery from both pupils and teachers. Ten site visits to schools (seven in person, three online) were conducted to gain an enriched understanding of programme delivery and capture young person voice.

The report is divided into five substantive sections: Engagement & Delivery; Insight; Impact; Achievements and Challenges and Embedding and Sustaining Active Recovery Curriculums in schools. Five video case studies and four narrative case studies are presented at Appendix C.

### ARC Aims & Objectives

Pupils:

- Improved mental health
- Improved physical health and literacy
- Improved reported school outcomes

### *spear* Research Questions

- Have Active Recovery Curriculums enhanced young people's physical, mental, social and emotional recovery?
- What do Active Recovery Curriculums look like?
- What have we learnt from Active Recovery Curriculums about the role and value of activity in schools?
- Which elements of Active Recovery Curriculum implementation are most effective for achieving desired outcomes in schools?

Table 1. Active Recovery Curriculum evaluation

	Research	Sample
<b>Young Person Survey<sup>a</sup></b>	All young people (Key Stage 2 and above) engaged in ARC activities invited to complete an end of term pupil survey. The survey captures impact on physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing derived from the YST's core wellbeing and physical literacy survey questions for young people.	Survey responses received from 470 pupils from 9 schools
<b>Teacher Survey</b>	All teaching staff involved in implementation and delivery of an ARC invited to complete a teachers end of term survey. The survey captures teachers' perceptions of challenges and key priorities and the role and impact of ARCs on pupils' physical, mental, social and emotional recovery.	Survey responses received from 28 teachers from 10 schools
<b>Site Visits</b>	Site visits to schools including observation of activity sessions and interviews with young people, deliverers, teachers and headteachers.	7 site visits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Griffydham Primary School, Leicestershire</li> <li>- Benfield School, Newcastle</li> <li>- Flora Gardens Primary school, London</li> <li>- St Joseph's Primary School, Bournemouth</li> <li>- The Bourne Academy, Bournemouth</li> <li>- Hillstone Primary School, Birmingham</li> <li>- Cheslyn Hay, Staffordshire</li> </ul>
<b>E-Visits</b>	Online focus groups and interviews with young people, deliverers, teachers and head teachers. Photos and video footage of school setting and activities in action captured by schools and sent to <i>spear</i> .	3 E-visits with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- St Breock Primary School, Cornwall</li> <li>- Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Birmingham</li> <li>- Comberton Village School, Cambridgeshire</li> </ul>
<b>Case Studies<sup>b</sup></b>	A combination of video and narrative case studies developed from site and E-visits to schools to capture multiple perspectives of delivery, experiences and impact.	9 case studies (5 videos and 4 narrative) providing details on activities, delivery, engagement, impact, and tips for embedding and sustaining ARCs. Each case study includes young person and teacher voice.
<b>Key Messages</b>	Infographic developed from communication with teaching staff and young people to steer ARC development and provide an accessible guide to effective and sustainable future delivery.	

<sup>a</sup> Young Person Survey and data shown at Appendix A

<sup>b</sup> Narrative case studies presented at Appendix C, video case studies presented as mp4 files

## Engagement & Delivery

Active Recovery Curriculums were implemented on the return of all school children to classroom learning on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 following a series of national lockdowns. Both primary and secondary schools have adopted unique and innovative approaches to give pupils more opportunities to be active and spend time outdoors during the school day. A number of wellbeing concerns are evident as a result of lockdown restrictions, missed schooling and limited opportunities. Schools have adjusted traditional, classroom-based curriculum provision and prioritised physical activity with the aim of enhancing young people's recovery and improving wellbeing and development.

A total of 10 schools from across England (6 primary, 4 secondary) participated in the ARC research. The research comprises a Young People Survey alongside nine Case Studies from site or E-visits to schools.

The Teacher Survey aimed to measure perceived changes in pupil outcomes and highlight delivery challenges and effective practice. A total of 28 responses were gathered across the 10 ARC participating schools comprising headteachers, class teachers, PE specialist teachers, sports coaches and teaching assistants. Using a selection of YST core questions, the Young Person Survey aimed to explore young peoples' perceptions of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing and physical activity levels in the time back at school following the Easter holidays. The survey was completed by 470 pupils from 9 schools (5 primary, 4 secondary) Young Person Survey demographics are presented at Appendix A alongside the survey and survey responses.

Video and narrative case studies were developed for each ARC participant school and are presented at Appendix C. These case studies showcase the distinctive ways schools incorporated more opportunities to be active into their timetables and the individual impacts of their approaches.

The 'Active Recovery Hub' provides free resources aimed to inspire and facilitate activity in schools. However, ARC is a non-prescriptive programme and as such schools demonstrate a range of diverse approaches while sharing a core goal of improving wellbeing through increased physical activity opportunities. For some schools, the ARC was delivered for a distinct period in the immediate return to school after lockdown. One school (Holy Family Catholic Primary School) adopted a reduced curriculum of English, Maths, Religious Education and PE for the first 5 weeks of return to school, while another (St Breock Primary School) focused on regular bursts of activity throughout the day during the first 2 weeks to help pupils regain their stamina for learning. Other primary schools have added extra physical activity sessions such as 'The Daily Mile', 'movement breaks' and 'Pause for Play' into their regular timetable to ensure pupils have an opportunity to be active every day (Griffydam Primary School; Hillstone Primary School).

### Activities<sup>c</sup>

“

*The focus in lessons has been providing opportunities to be as active as possible, with the understanding that fitness levels and confidence may have decreased.*

Secondary Head of PE

“

*After school clubs have been participation-focused as opposed to performance-focused as we have not had fixtures.*

Secondary school teacher

“

*We have incorporated wellbeing through our PE curriculum and have 12 pillars of wellbeing which pupils will focus on.... We have also increased our afterschool clubs to over 27 clubs a week.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*Focused on additional activities on top of the normal PE curriculum. Movement breaks and exercises in class using various apps and technology that encourage movement.*

Primary school teacher

Site Visits & Teacher Survey

<sup>c</sup> Active Recovery Curriculum activities listed at Appendix B

In order to accommodate an additional hour of activity per week, one school (Flora Gardens Primary School) has added additional weekly 'Curriculum PE' sessions, within which activity is embedded into a lesson of another subject that would previously be taught in a classroom. With the exception of one school (St Josephs Primary School) who has tailored the physical literacy programme 'Active-8' for pupils identified as most in need, ARCs have been designed for whole school participation.

In secondary schools, making changes to the overall curriculum has been less feasible due to timetabling, staffing and assessment constraints. One school (Cheslyn Hay Academy) benefitted from lessons being extended to 100 minutes in duration in an effort to reduce pupils mixing through footfall in corridors between lessons. All secondary schools observed have shifted the focus of their PE lessons to physical wellbeing, prioritising fitness and skill development over competition. In addition, they have adjusted the sports they offer and try to provide some element of choice to young people in an effort to enhance engagement and enjoyment.

All schools have extended their extracurricular offer to provide additional opportunities for young people to be active and integrate with peers. Some primary schools have tripled the number of weekly clubs on offer compared with pre-COVID-19. Further key differences in ARC provision between schools are due to available facilities and space. Throughout the ongoing pandemic, the need to restrict children and staff to bubbles and avoid mixing large groups of people has placed limitations on activities on offer. Some of the more rural schools benefit from forest school facilities, outdoor classrooms, large open spaces and playing fields, giving them freedom to accommodate multiple classes being active at once or spontaneously move learning outside when weather permits. Other schools have to operate within tighter space constraints and as such timetables have been meticulously planned to ensure equal opportunities for all.

During site visits, secondary school pupils reported only being active or outdoors during the school day within their curriculum PE lessons. Engagement in the evaluation in primary schools was facilitated mostly by Headteachers, while in the Secondary schools this was led by PE staff, who had fewer freedoms to make radical timetable changes. Primary schools were able to adjust entire work schemes to accommodate additional physical activity alongside core subjects, while the focus in secondary schools was around enhancing existing PE time to meet the changing needs of pupils.

Many schools reported running special events during the summer term. Some events, such as sports days and residential trips, were part of the normal school calendar and schools resisted pressure to cancel such events reasoning that pupils had already missed out on so much through the year. Some schools sought to put on additional events such as a sports week, an ASPIRE day (The Bourne Academy), a career in sport day (Cheslyn Hay Academy), leadership training, visits from external clubs, teams or athletes for taster sessions or day trips to activity centres.

## Activities: Pupil voice

“

*Instead of writing about the Battle of Britain it's doing it.*

Primary school pupil

“

*We've been doing Maths lessons outside, our teacher would tell us the type of shape and we'd have to draw them with chalk on the ground in our groups of three.*

Primary school pupil

“

*The first couple of days we didn't do any lessons, we were just talking and having buddies so we could just get used to being back at school with everyone.*

Primary school pupil

“

*We've been doing circle time outside and doing something called 'Pause for Play'. We'd all get up and go outside, run in the playground come back and do 10 star jumps. Then we're ready to learn again.*

Primary school pupil

“

*I've loved sports day, and I loved our mini residential as we did lots of running and sport.*

Primary school pupil

Site Visits & Young Person Survey

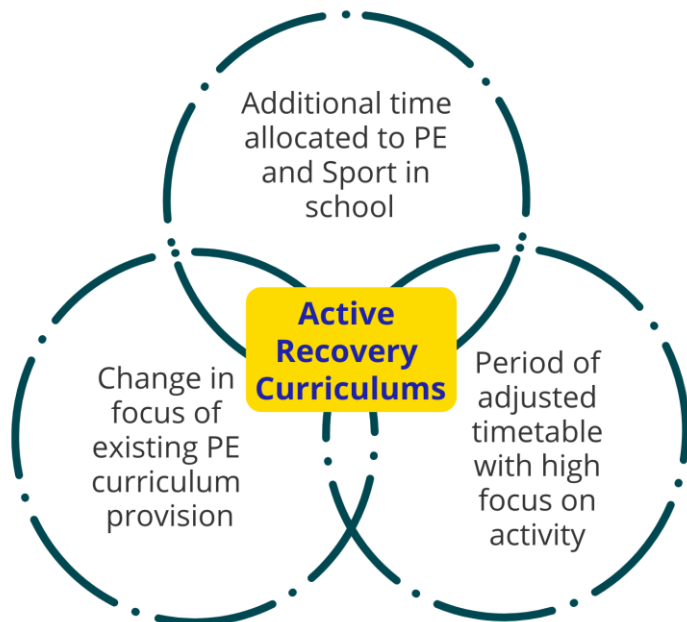




Some schools started their **Active Recovery Curriculums** sooner but the research focused from 8th March 2021

10 diverse schools from across the UK took part in the research (6 primary and 4 secondary)

Goal: to prioritise time spent being **active** and **outdoors** for young people in recovery from COVID-19 in schools



### ARCS included:

- Increased focus on health and lifestyle
- Special events and activity days
- Novel sports and activities
- Fitness training
- More extra-curricular activities
- Opportunities to spend time with peers
- Physical activity incorporated into other subjects

### Key elements of physical activity in schools:

#### Primary Schools

- Activity everyday
- Regular activity breaks
- Physical literacy
- Outdoor learning
- Activity within other curriculum lessons

#### Secondary Schools

- Participation focus
- Choice of activities
- Physical literacy
- Outdoor learning





## Insight

Despite innate differences in ARC approaches, site visits, teacher interviews and Teacher Survey responses reveal common themes in schools' motivations for adopting an ARC.

Teachers reported distinct differences in the amount of activity pupils engaged in during periods of home schooling and lockdown, leading to a notable loss of fitness for many pupils, and in some cases weight gain when they returned to school. Disparity in activity levels is largely related to socio-economic status with pupils attending schools in urban areas of high deprivation much less likely to spend time outdoors or being active (Holy Family/Flora Gardens) than those attending rural village schools (Griffydham, Comberton, St Breock). Only 4% of pupils in the Young Person Survey report being 'a lot less' active since returning to school. Most pupils report increasing their physical activity when they returned to school, highlighting reduced activity levels during lockdown compared to when pupils are at school. As a result, many schools incorporated health education into their ARC provision, providing clear explanations to pupils about the purpose and wide-ranging benefits of being fit and regularly active.

In addition to reduced physical fitness, many teachers reported pupils had lost the ability to maintain focus for prolonged periods of time. One of the goals of ARC was to help to break up periods of concentration and rebuild pupils' stamina for learning. Primary schools in particular have implemented short, high intensity bursts of activity throughout the day in a bid to not only improve fitness, but to give pupils a chance to re-set and re-focus their attention.

Most pupils said they were excited to see their friends and preferred to be in school than at home. Despite being keen to re-integrate with peers, teachers in both primary and secondary schools reported issues in pupils' ability to communicate with one another. Some cited persistent low-level disruptions such as name calling, use of inappropriate language, impatience and intolerance when interacting with peers and an increase in fall outs between friends. They also reported an increase in disputes arising from social media interactions manifesting in conflict between peers. Improving interaction and communication was a focal point for some schools, who elected to incorporate team building activities, or competitive team sports within their ARCs.

Many pupils reported being excited to get back to PE lessons and playing games in person, as online PE 'wasn't the same'. Although true for many, teachers reported cases of extreme loss of confidence, or a lack of motivation, energy and engagement from some pupils. Most schools have attempted to provide a variety of opportunities, activities and special events, and have also enabled pupils to exercise some level of choice over their activities in a bid to help all pupils find something they enjoy and can benefit from.

## On return to school

“

*After lockdown there was an increased importance of health; I'm wearing a mask here but if I stay healthy I can create a mask for the inside of my body, so that's been quite good.*

Secondary school PE teacher

“

*When we came back it was quite a shock to realise that the children had lost much of their stamina for the classroom.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*Inside the classroom was fine but outside they had completely lost the ability to interact decently with each other... Interaction has become a huge issue and is more important than the academic catch up.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*When they came back from lockdown, we had this big perception that students were going to come back with mental health issues. Really what I found was what they'd really missed was a routine...they really wanted to be back.*

Secondary PE teacher

Site Visits & Teacher Survey

When asked in the survey what the ‘top 3 priorities’ should be for schools in the national recovery effort from COVID-19, all teachers stated either ‘mental health and wellbeing’, or an ‘increase in physical activity’ as their first priority. This reflects understanding among teachers of the interaction between increased physical activity and benefits on mental wellbeing. Other priorities commonly listed included teacher wellbeing, parental interactions, giving pupils ownership over what is included in PE, increasing opportunities, outdoor learning, socialising, and recreational and competitive opportunities. Only a small number of teachers suggested ‘Curriculum catch up’ and this was their third priority, highlighting unanimous recognition by teaching staff of the importance of ensuring young people receive support to restore overall health and wellbeing, ahead of focusing on academic attainment. The perception that academic achievement is most likely to occur when pupils have good physical and mental health features strongly throughout interviews with teachers and responses to the teachers survey.

In spite of the negative impacts of COVID-19, many teachers have been impressed by the resilience of young people and felt that overall pupil wellbeing following the pandemic is better than had been expected, although remained vigilant to arising needs over time.

*They were so pleased to be back initially. It was a bit of a honeymoon period. After a few weeks a lot of those mental health issues started to come to the surface. It really was quite challenging for a time because children were displaying behaviours they wouldn't normally display because of their experiences and this dreadful sense of loss they felt. We were able to talk through what individuals needed rather than thinking we needed to crack on with literacy and maths, as actually its counterproductive. Claire Coates, Headteacher Griffydam Primary School*

The Teacher Survey shows the majority of teachers felt all measures of wellbeing had decreased ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ when pupils returned to school following lockdown restrictions, as shown in Figure 1.

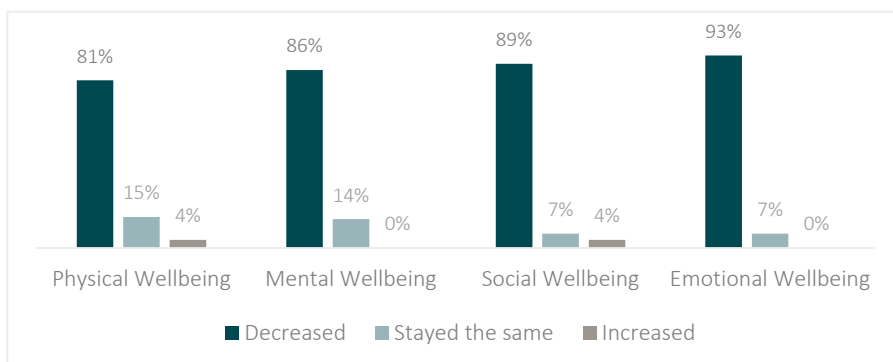


Figure 1. Teachers’ perceptions of pupil wellbeing on returning to school following lockdown (Teacher Survey, n=28).

## On return to school: Pupil voice

“

*When I got back it was like a return to normality.*

Secondary school pupil

“

*Being home was difficult and hard to get used to. Being at school is more fun.*

Primary school pupil

“

*Because we were in lockdown for ages, when we came back it made me feel really nervous about things and I thought things were going to change. We couldn't do much and couldn't go outside so I felt really unfit.*

Primary school pupil

“

*I was most looking forward to doing more sport at school compared to being at home.*

Primary school pupil

“

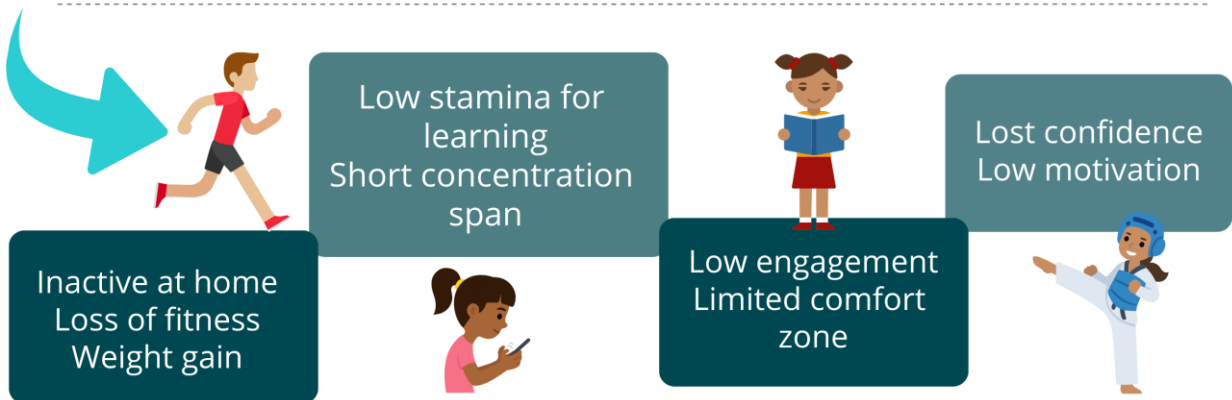
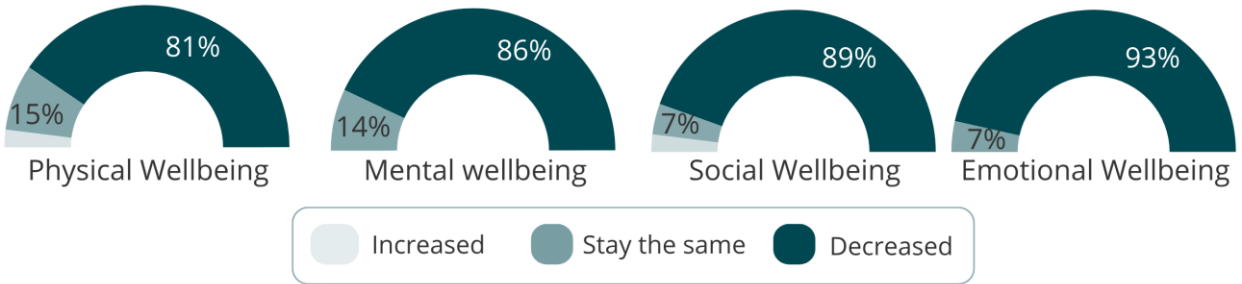
*It was difficult during lockdown to be separated from family and friends. I was feeling shy because I hadn't really seen my classmates in so long.*

Primary school pupil

Site Visits

All teachers said **physical activity** or **mental health** should be the top priority for schools in the recovery from COVID-19

After lockdown, teachers felt pupils' wellbeing had...



When pupils returned to school on 8th March 2021:

**More behaviour issues reported:**

- Conflict between peers
- Low level disruption in class
- Impatience
- Acting out
- Low tolerance with one another
- Inappropriate language
- Friends falling out



## Impact

Following Active Recovery Curriculums, teachers, school staff, pupils and parents report an array of benefits and impacts for those involved. Anecdotal evidence and examples are showcased within the case studies. Data from the Young Person Survey, Teacher Survey and site visits has been collated and common themes are explored in this section.

### Physical Wellbeing

Since returning to school, 71% of pupils reported their activity levels have increased ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’, 17% reported ‘no change’ and 11% said their activity had decreased.

Overall, 6% of pupils said they completed 60 minutes of activity on ‘no days’ of the week, while 40% said they were active for 60 minutes on most (5, 6 or 7) days of the week. This is comparable to Active Lives Children and Young People data<sup>1</sup>, which reports 45% of young people are active for 60 minutes or more every day. Although questions and explanations were clearly worded to encourage young people to add up cumulative activity, primary school teachers who supported survey completion reported children underestimating their minutes of physical activity, as they were likely to only consider structured PE time or extracurricular activities, and disregard play times or active travel to school. Despite possible underreporting, when examined separately, a larger proportion of primary pupils were active on all or most days of the week compared with secondary pupils as shown in Figure 2.

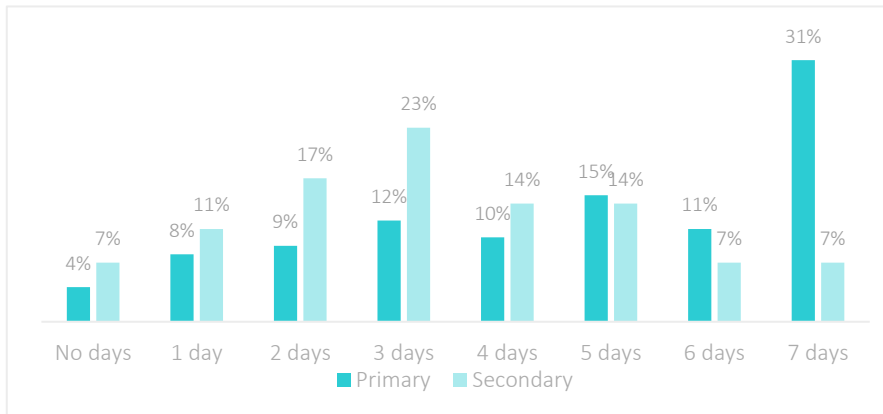


Figure 2. Number of days per week primary and secondary pupils are active for 60 minutes (Young Person Survey: Primary n=199; Secondary n=243).

Similarly, a higher percentage of primary pupils (84%) reported an increase in their activity levels than secondary pupils (63%) since returning to school. These differences are reflective of the ARC opportunities provided by schools, as many primary schools opted to increase overall physical activity provision and aimed to include some time being active every day.

<sup>1</sup> Sport England. Active Lives Children and Young People Survey. Academic Year 2019-2020.

### Impact on physical wellbeing

“

*Eating disorders and body image issues have become apparent through the curriculum, particularly among girls. We are trying to emphasise that not everyone is sporty and needs to be pushed down this sporty channel, focus on activity instead. This active curriculum is just about students being active daily, and to make a habit and a routine for life really.*

Secondary School PE teacher

“

*Fitness training to get the kids base fitness levels up, and The Daily Mile have worked really well.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*We have seen an improvement within our individual groups of fitness levels improving. Uptake in lessons is the best it's been in a long time as pupils come to school in their PE kit- that's been a real positive for us.*

Secondary school head of PE

Site visit interviews and Teacher Survey

Overall increases in activity were corroborated by teachers, who reported whether time allocated to PE and sport within the curriculum, outdoor learning, and extracurricular sport and physical activity had changed since all pupils returned to face-to-face learning (Figure 3).

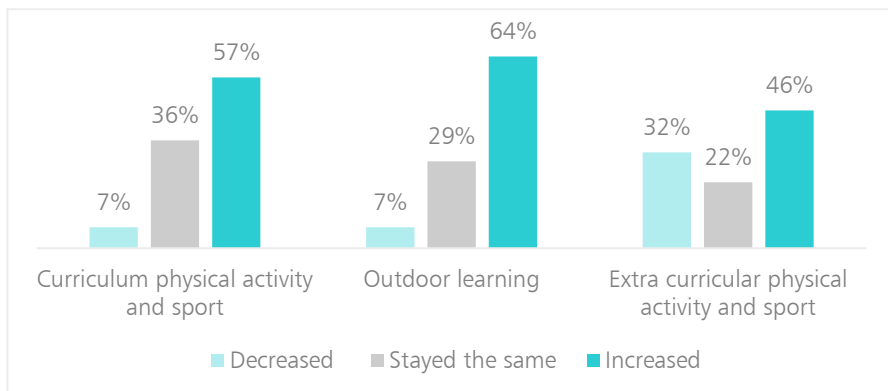


Figure 3. Changes in teaching provision following lockdown restrictions (Teacher Survey, n=28).

Teachers reported weight gain, a lack of fitness and limited motivation to be active for some pupils when they first returned after lockdown. As such, additional focus was placed on the benefits of being active for physical and mental wellbeing and by the end of term many teachers reported noteworthy increases in the fitness and engagement of pupils.

*We've made an effort to encourage pupils to want to be involved and given lots of options so they all have the chance to do something they may enjoy. Understanding the importance and benefits of physical activity is likely to make young people want to engage in their own time in the future. Steve Rushton, PE Teacher, Cheslyn Hay Academy*

Findings suggest some young people recognise the benefits and are making changes in their family lives. One secondary pupil said, *'We played rounders and stuff as a family during lockdown, but we definitely do more now. My mum does some stuff too. It encourages us all to motivate ourselves and push us a bit further'*.

When asked in the survey *'How do you think being active at school has helped you?'* some pupils reported increases in physical activity outside of school (*'It has made me do more when I get home'*) or taking up sports outside of school once they have been introduced in school (*'I tried surfing with school and now I go to a club every Sunday'*).

When asked to rate how they felt about being active, a total of 96% of pupils *'agree'* (34%) or *'strongly agree'* (62%) they *'understand why exercise and sports are good for me'*, and overall, 59% *'agree'* (41%) or *'strongly agree'* (18%) they *'find exercise and sports easy'*. Percentages of pupils who *'strongly agree'* with these comparable statements are slightly lower than Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Data, within which 68% and 22% strongly agreed with these statements respectively. From questions tailored to the Active Recovery Curriculum Young Person

## Impact on physical wellbeing: Pupil voice

“

*Going on the treadmill to exercise helps to make your heart beat faster. Feels like you are doing something that's good for your health and also really fun.*

Secondary school pupil

“

*It brought back my motivation. When we were in lockdown I didn't have any motivation, but coming back to PE at school has re-kindled that fire inside of me.*

Secondary school pupil

“

*I have improved my stamina and got back into a routine.*

Secondary School Pupil

“

*The fit 5 really pushes you at the start and is a good warm-up. It has made me realise how important it is to stay active.*

Secondary School Pupil

“

*It has helped me with my health because when I eat a lot of sweets at home I get fat.*

Primary school pupil

Site Visits & Young Person Survey

Survey, 78% 'like doing exercise and sports at school', 72% 'want to do more exercise and sports at school'. Taken together, these responses of positive attitudes indicate that most pupils are engaged, and value time spent being active, but there is scope to increase pupils' knowledge, self-efficacy and motivation overall.

## Mental and Emotional Wellbeing and Development

Teachers and parents voiced concerns about the effects of lockdowns on pupils mental health and emotional wellbeing. Almost all teachers felt that emotional wellbeing (processing, managing and expressing feelings) for young people had decreased 'a little' (57%) or 'a lot' (36%) when they returned to school following lockdowns. Similarly, they felt mental wellbeing (processing and understanding information) had also decreased 'a little' (54%) or 'a lot' (32%).

In focus groups during site visits, many pupils reported finding lockdown to be 'difficult', 'boring' and 'lonely'. Most said they were 'excited' to return to the classroom and see their friends, although many pupils also said they felt 'nervous' and 'anxious' when they first went back to school.

Young people rated how happy they felt yesterday on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely happy). Ratings, shown in Figure 4, are varied, and young people identify their happiness throughout the breadth of the scale. Just over half (54%) rated their happiness in the upper end (7-10) of the scale, indicating that many young people feel they could be happier than they are. The mean happiness score from all responses is 6.3, comparable to an average happiness score of 6.6 measured by the 2019/2020 academic year Active Lives Children and Young People Survey.

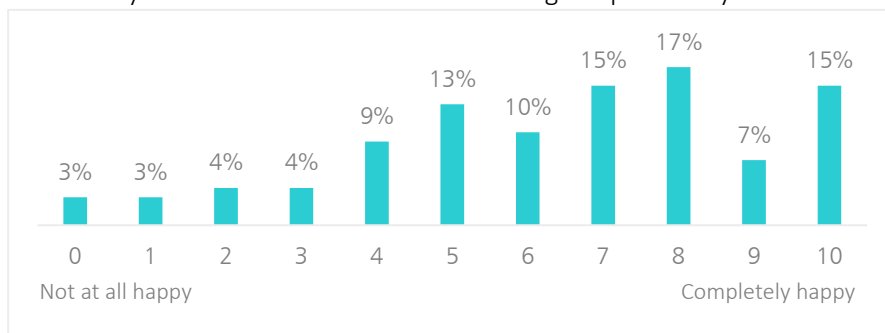


Figure 4. Ratings of happiness (Young Person Survey, n=470).

Since returning to school after the Easter holidays, 68% of pupils reported an improvement in their resilience and ability to keep trying something until they can do it. In relation to physical activity provision, this reflects the extra support and opportunities young people have had, which may have allowed them more time to spend developing and perfecting new skills. General commentary from teachers has said 'children are remarkably resilient'; children were very happy to be back at school and re-adjusted quickly as a result.

For over a quarter of young people (27%), their aspirations (I feel I can achieve anything I want), had not changed. Over half felt their aspirations

## Impact on mental and emotional wellbeing

“

*Shift in our perspective of outcome of lessons. To encourage and rebuild motivation and engagement in addition to learning new skills and developing performance.*

Secondary school PE teacher

“

*I chose children for the programme; those lacking in confidence, anxious, not good team players and reluctant school attenders.*

Primary school teacher

“

*We use emotion hoops at the start of PE lessons. Children place their water bottle into red, yellow or green hoops depending on how they are feeling. They can update it throughout the lesson. PE staff are very good at implementing this and communicating with children about their emotions.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*The sense of belonging to a group that they had created. This has made them feel proud of themselves and enjoyment and happiness has increased.*

Secondary School PE teacher

Site Visits & Teacher Survey



were 'a bit better' (33%) or 'a lot better' (23%), and some (13%) felt their aspirations had become 'a little' or 'a lot' worse.

When asked to rate self-belief and confidence in their own abilities, 59% of pupils said this had improved during the summer term, while 21% said there was 'no change' in their self-belief and 17% said this had got worse. Young people were also asked to rate their confidence using the statement 'I feel confident when I exercise or play sports'. Most young people either 'agree' (32%) or 'strongly agree' (40%) with the statement, while the remainder 'disagree' (16%), 'strongly disagree' (8%) or 'can't say' (4%).

As well as commenting on feeling more confident, some pupils recognise achievements and progression relating to specific sports, fitness and body image which are likely to contribute to the increased feeling of confidence. Many primary school children said they feel fitter and stronger.

*'I feel a bit more confident with swimming'*

*'My fitness levels have upgraded by 2x as we are now doing The Daily Mile'*

*'Being active at school has helped me. I can now run all the way through The Daily Mile.'*

*'It has helped me become faster and made me want to try harder'*

*'It has made me more confident about my body'*

Young people survey responses

When separated into primary and secondary school data, primary school pupils reported greater improvements in markers of personal development and wellbeing, while more secondary school pupils felt these had become worse. This is particularly evident in the measure of self-belief, as shown in Figure 5.

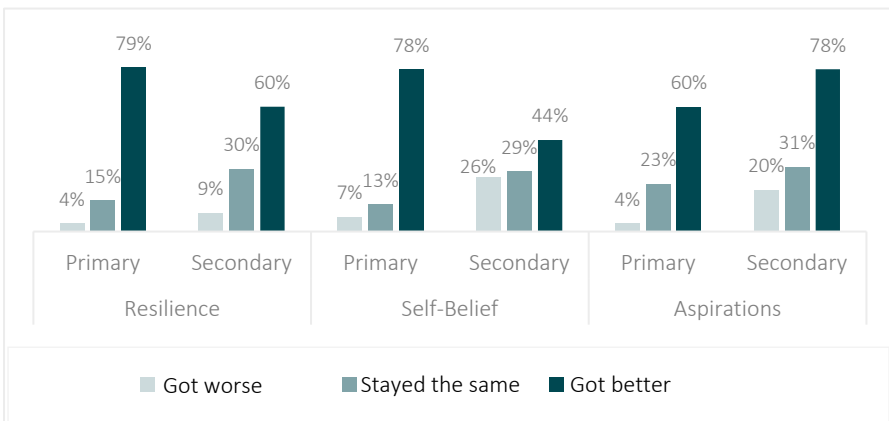


Figure 5. Perceived changes in resilience, self-belief and aspirations of pupils since returning to school (Young Person Survey: Primary n=199, Secondary n=243).

### Impact of ARC on mental and emotional wellbeing: Pupil voice

“  
*I think it has helped my mindset and fitness because I feel more confidence in myself.*

Primary school pupil

“  
*It made me more confident.*

Primary school pupil

“  
*It has made me more happy.*

Primary school pupil

“  
*It has helped with my mood and my strength. It's fun and it makes me happy.*

Primary school pupil

“  
*Being active at school makes me feel happy and free.*

Primary school pupil

“  
*I think it has helped us become more resilient and to keep trying even if we fail.*

Primary school pupil

Site Visits & Young Person Survey



In primary schools, most ARCs included additional hours of activity and schools were able to evolve their timetable and overall curriculum responsively throughout the term to adopt a physical activity or wellbeing focus as needed. In contrast, secondary schools were under pressure to deliver prescribed curriculum across all subjects which may have resulted in fewer opportunities for young people to exercise resilience and gain in confidence.

The difference between age groups may also be reflective of general factors associated with adolescence; perceptions of academic pressure, higher value placed on peer opinion, body image and self-consciousness, which may reduce perceived confidence, resilience and aspirations.

In spite of slight differences between primary and secondary outcomes, most teachers surveyed recognised increases in resilience (86%), self-belief (83%) and aspirations (61%).

In support of young peoples' qualitative and quantitative perceptions of improved mental and emotional wellbeing, 89% of teachers felt that emotional wellbeing had increased 'a little' (71%) or 'a lot' (18%), and 86% said that mental wellbeing had increased 'a little' (61%) or 'a lot' (25%) since implementing an ARC.

## Social Wellbeing

On return to school, 89% of teachers said that social wellbeing (sense of belonging and interactions with others) had decreased, however following engagement in an ARC, this was reversed and 89% of teachers felt social wellbeing had improved, as shown in Figure 6.

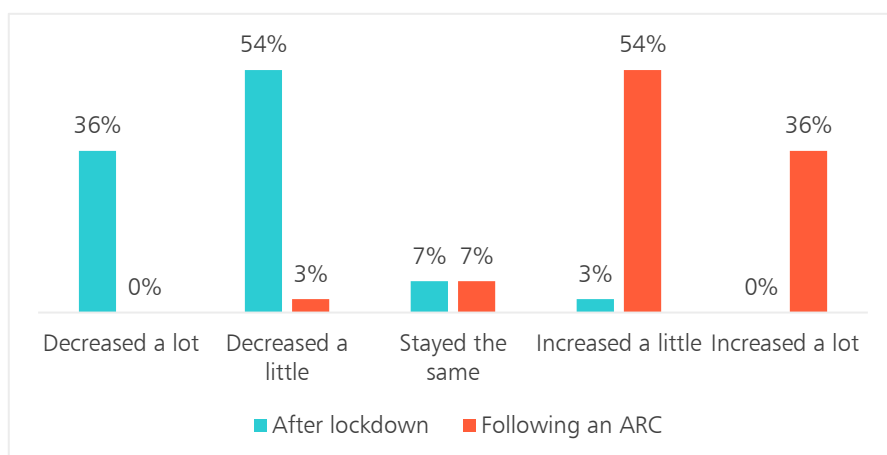


Figure 6. Teacher perceptions of social wellbeing before and after an ARC (Teacher Survey, n=28).

During site visits most pupils said they had been looking forward to returning to school to see their friends. Active Recovery Curriculums placed additional emphasis on social interactions and were used to facilitate

*Personal wellbeing, teamwork, trust, talking with others. That's been our large focus. It's going very well. I'm absolutely delighted with it to be honest.* **Sam Naismith, Headteacher, Flora Gardens Primary school**

## Impact on social wellbeing

“

*The children are now very settled here. They've made excellent progress since they returned. Relationships have been rebuilt very quickly, and we are running our normal curriculum.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*Enabled children to rebuild friendships, trust in each other and trust in the staff. We are very isolated so in most cases children hadn't seen each other and it was important to allow them to rebuild friendships.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*Biggest thing for us was the social aspect, children had forgotten how to be a friend. How to speak to their friends. It was noticeable and having those first couple of weeks to allow them to reconnect with their friends and allow them to talk and being outside and playing together and all of those things they haven't been able to do for so long, that was the biggest impact.*

Primary school teacher

Site Visits & Teacher Survey

young people spending more time in each other’s company to rebuild friendships; this was highly valued by many young people.

In the survey, pupils voiced what they enjoyed about being active this term; many responses highlighted benefits to social wellbeing and mentioned interactions with friends. Teamwork was also commonly cited, reflecting a focus on team sports to develop communication and cohesion by some schools.

To measure interactions with others, young people were asked to rate changes in happiness and relationships since returning to school after the Easter holidays. Almost two thirds (63%) said ‘My happiness with the relationships I have with my friends and family’ are ‘a little better’ or ‘a lot better’, 21% reported ‘no change’ and 14% said these were ‘a little worse’ or ‘a lot worse’. This indicates that most young people are content with their friendships and feel these have been improved as regular face-to-face contact with peers has resumed.

**What have you most enjoyed about being active at school this term?**



Young Person Survey

Although most pupils felt happy to spend more time with their friends, it is noteworthy that for some pupils happiness in their relationships has become worse, suggesting they may have struggled or been overwhelmed by increased social contact.

Teachers have commented on improvements in social interactions but remain wary of ongoing issues with communication between peers. Some teachers suggested that pupils may have struggled with face-to-face communication, after a period of communicating with peers almost exclusively via social media.

Perceptions of empathy (I am able to understand how other people are feeling) improved for 69% of young people, while 25% said this had not changed. Within their ARCs, schools placed an increased focus on wellbeing and adopted a holistic approach to all round health. As such, it may be that this helped pupils develop an improved understanding of how people around them might be feeling.

**Impact on social wellbeing: Pupil voice**

“

*Being with your friends and being able to communicate with people during PE kind of makes the experience much more fun.*

Secondary school pupil

“

*When I was being home schooled I felt like I was trapped and it was quite annoying because I wasn't with my friends. When I came back to school I was so happy to be able to learn with all my friends again.*

Primary school pupil

“

*I have enjoyed winning and the competitive side of sport that puts you and your team together.*

Secondary school pupil

“

*I have enjoyed being in a group of girls that I'm close friends with, because they don't judge you and it helps my confidence.*

Secondary school pupil

Site Visits & Young Person Survey

## Academic progress

Headteachers and teachers are aware of gaps in academic progression as a result of missed schooling, however recognised the need to ensure overall wellbeing as a priority over academic catch up. It was believed if the mental, emotional, and social needs of young people are met, then learning will fall into place over time. This is reiterated in the survey, as only 3 teachers cited ‘academic catch up’ as one of the top 3 priorities for schools in the recovery from COVID-19.

*If children are anxious or worried then how are they going to learn, they're not ready to learn. Having those couple of weeks really made a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our children. Sian Hall, headteacher, St Breock Primark School*

Since implementing an ARC, 75% of teachers noted an increase in pupils’ academic progress, and 18% thought this had ‘stayed the same’. While it is probable that progress is due to face-to-face learning of academic subjects, teachers and pupils explain how being active has helped them in the classroom. Although not cited as a priority, teachers were allocating additional time for ‘benchmarking’, and cited regular tracking of progression and attainment. Measuring progress within sport and physical activity was a common theme in secondary schools; times, scores and skill performance were tracked in some sports, and pupils were afforded opportunities to push themselves and improve (Benfield, Cheslyn Hay).

Overall, 66% of pupils feel their progress at school has got ‘a lot better’ or ‘a bit better’ since returning to school, however when broken down into age groups, primary pupils have a greater perception of improved progress than secondary pupils, as shown in Figure 7.

Three quarters (74%) of pupils ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement ‘doing exercise and sports at school helps me learn’. When broken down, this applied to a higher proportion of primary pupils (91%) than secondary pupils (63%).

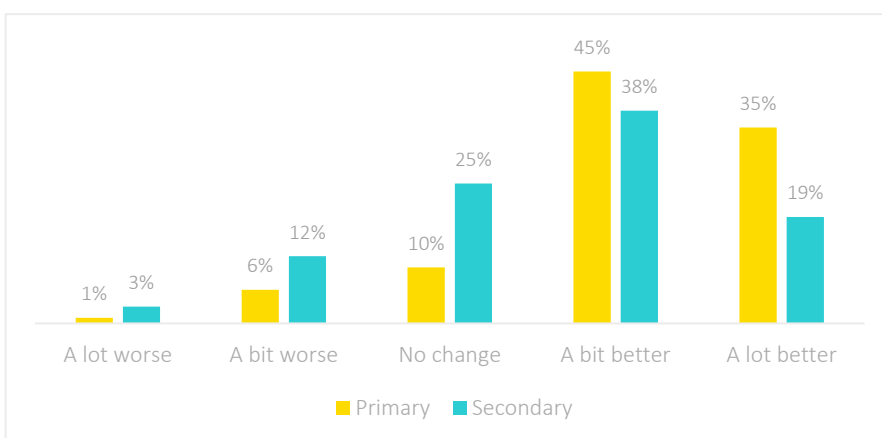


Figure 7. Perceptions of progress at school for pupils since returning to school (Young Person Survey: Primary n=199, Secondary n=243).

## Impact on academic development

“  
*Important for building concentration, enabling them to settle down, enabling them to sit at their tables, write for sustained period, gross to fine motor skills has been really helpful for children.*

Primary school headteacher

“  
*In terms of what goes on in the classrooms, we have considered a lot more keenly the sorts of activities that are going to help children and we recognise the importance of good physical literacy in pupil outcomes. It's allowed us to refresh our vision for our school.*

Primary school headteacher

“  
*In the younger years there were big developmental gaps as they'd missed a huge chunk of time in the nursery and/or reception and the developmental gaps were more visible.*

Primary school headteacher

Site Visits & Teacher Survey

Teachers reported a lack of concentration and ability to focus or sit still for long periods of time when pupils first returned to school.

*When children returned, they didn't have stamina for schoolwork and were getting tired quickly. Sian Hall, Headteacher, St Breock Primary*

Primary schools gradually built up to longer periods of concentration over time through regular activity breaks, with the expectation that this would eventually reflect in academic outcomes. In addition to overall academic progress, many pupils recognise the benefits being active has on their daily classroom experiences:

*'PE helps you burn off energy which helps you concentrate better with the lessons'*

*'Pause for Play freshens my mind, makes me feel more relaxed and more ready to learn'*

*'It makes me less fidgety in class'*

*'Helped me learn to a greater extent because I am calmer'*

Young people survey and site visit data

Outdoor education was also encouraged within ARCs. Schools felt it was important for children and young people to spend more time in nature and to get more fresh air after long periods of staying at home. Outdoor learning may also have been encouraged due to reduced transmission of COVID-19 in ventilated spaces. Almost all pupils (88%) agreed with the statement *'I like having lessons outside'*, suggesting that motivation for learning in this setting should be high. It was not possible to measure or compare how much time different schools and pupils spent being active outdoors compared with indoors to establish any differences in the effectiveness of outdoor vs indoor settings as part of ARCs.

## Wider outcomes

While the focus of ARCs is on pupil outcomes, the adoption of whole school approaches, particularly in primary schools, has resulted in wider benefits for school staff. Staff have enjoyed having extra opportunities to be active and some have joined in by being active during lessons and afterschool clubs. One secondary school (Comberton School) reported staff supporting one another in a virtual running group via Strava, and the introduction of a staff tennis club.

There are also examples of active behaviours being adopted into family life. One headteacher reported a higher number of families choosing to cycle to school (Griffydham Primary School). Children and teachers talk about maintaining daily family walks they adopted during lockdown, and pupils mention being active with their families in local green spaces. Some secondary school pupils mentioned completing 'couch to 5K' with their family as a way to be more active.

## Impact on academic development: Pupil voice

“

*Gets things off your mind so you don't have to worry about what's happening in the classroom.*

Primary school pupil

*It helps me let out my frustration and the thoughts that are buzzing in my head by going for a walk and enjoying fresh air and doing some activity to just focus your mind to try and stop you from being frustrated so when you get back inside you're ready to learn because you've focused your mind.*

Primary school pupil

“

*It keeps my mind clear and is easier to stay focussed and learn better.*

Primary school pupil

“

*It gives me a break from writing, learning and I enjoy learning outside as I feel I thrive in that department better.*

Primary school pupil

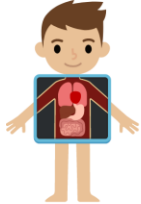
“

*It helps me concentrate with my learning.*

Primary school pupil

Site Visits & Young Person Surveys

**Physical**



**Lifestyle, health and fitness** were key themes for PE in schools

96% of pupils understand why physical activity and sports are important



**Pupils were more active outside of school**

- Extracurricular sports
- Daily family walks
- Cycling to school
- Activities as a family



Schools offered **more activity** and **time outdoors** in the curriculum

Primary pupils were **more active** than secondary pupils

*“I can now run all the way through The Daily Mile  
It has made me more confident about my body  
It has made me want to try harder”*  
(Primary and secondary pupils)

**Mental and Emotional**

Since taking part in an Active Recovery Curriculum, many young people reported **increases in markers of development**, compared to first going back to school



Pupils said lockdown was...

- Boring
- Lonely
- Difficult

Coming back to school made them feel...

- Shy
- Nervous
- Anxious
- Happy

Since returning to school:

**71%** of pupils have increased their physical activity

**72%** of pupils want to do more physical activity and sport at school

**78%** of pupils like being active and doing sport at school



**86%** of teachers thought mental wellbeing had improved

**89%** of teachers thought pupils' emotional wellbeing had increased

**Social**

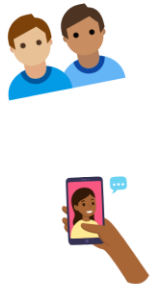
When pupils first returned to school 89% of teachers said pupil social wellbeing had decreased



After an ARC 89% of teachers said pupil social wellbeing had improved

Active recovery curriculums helped young people with....

“Being with your friends and being able to communicate with people during PE kind of makes the experience much more fun.”  
(Secondary school pupil)



making friends  
communication  
rebuilding friendships  
teamwork  
making memories  
trust  
socialising

Since returning to school:

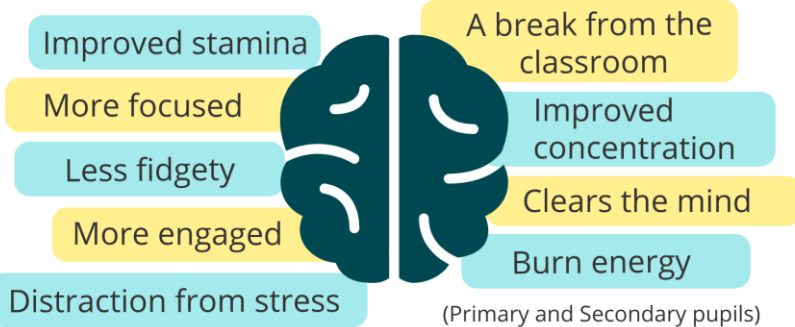
Happiness and relationships with friends and family has improved for **63%** of pupils

&

**69%** of pupils feel their empathy has improved

**Academic**

**Benefits of being active:**



(Primary and Secondary pupils)



Some gaps in academic progression but catch up has been good  
(Teacher)



**91%** of primary and **63%** of secondary pupils said **being active helps them learn**

**88%** of pupils would like to have **more lessons outside**



**75%** of teachers reported improvements in academic progress

**66%** of pupils thought their academic progress had improved





## Achievements & Challenges

‘Time constraints’ was a key challenge cited by all schools who have negotiated competing priorities since they returned. Primary schools have tried to adopt regular, short, activity breaks, as a way to minimise disruption to learning, and to incorporate activity into other subjects.

Schools report a ‘whole school approach’ and many headteachers actively encouraged class teachers to explore more opportunities to be active and outdoors. Flexibility to adjust timetables has not been possible in secondary schools, although one school (Cheslyn Hay Academy) was able to increase activity time from 200 to 300 minutes for Key Stage 3 over a 2-week timetable.

In order to increase physical activity provision, some schools extended their extracurricular offer. Support from the school to do this, through marketing, communication between staff, teachers and departments were all considered helpful in ensuring good attendance from pupils.

Secondary schools reported fairly low attendances in extracurricular clubs, with attendance the worst in older year groups. This may have been because year groups were separated to maintain bubbles, and competitive sport against other schools was not taking place. All primary schools said attendance to afterschool clubs was much higher than before COVID-19, suggesting extra opportunities to be active are welcomed by pupils and their parents.

Some teachers felt engagement, enthusiasm and motivation were particularly low on return to school. This finding was more prevalent in secondary schools. To boost motivation and interest, schools tried to offer a wider variety of activities or find ways to give pupils a choice in what they did. Engagement has been lowest in those who are the least fit and the most sedentary during lockdowns. In an effort to engage these, and indeed all pupils, schools tried to promote a lifestyle, health and fitness focus over competition and excellence.

Secondary schools have had restricted use or closure of changing rooms. For some this impeded activity levels as pupils had to change in smaller groups, resulting in confidence issues exacerbated for some (*‘for girls, changing seems to have become an issue and they seem more body conscious than before’*, Mike Wilce, PE teacher, Comberton). In contrast, other schools elected for pupils to attend school in their PE kit on days when they had PE lessons. For one school in particular (Cheslyn Hay Academy), this was viewed as a key advantage (*‘engagement in lessons was the highest we have seen in years’*, Lucy Horobin, Head of PE, Cheslyn Hay Academy); fewer pupils were excused from lessons and teachers were able to fill the duration of lessons as no time was lost getting changed.

### Challenges

“

*Fitting everything into the school day.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*Time constraints as there is so much of the curriculum to fit in.*

Secondary school teacher

“

*Catching up on English and maths is necessary but wellbeing is most important.*

Primary school headteacher

“

*They need 10 times what we are offering and it still wouldn't be enough.*

Primary PE specialist teacher

“

*Bubbles makes allocating more time to students difficult.*

Secondary school PE teacher

Teacher Interviews & Teacher Survey



Missed opportunities were a big concern for all schools and as such all schools found novel ways to provide experiences over and above curriculum physical activity. Special events were held in all schools including additional sports days, residentials, day trips to activity centres, taster sessions from visiting sports clubs and athletes, dance and drama activities, engagement in National Schools Sports week and careers in sports events. Events such as these may have contributed to improvements in pupils' aspirations and confidence.

Communication remains an ongoing challenge for some schools. Anecdotal reports mention previously confident pupils becoming shy and reserved, more disagreements between friends, inappropriate language and name calling, and pupils refusing to work with others outside of their friendship groups. One teacher reported addressing issues at a year group level and noting temporary improvements. Providing young people with a platform to voice their concerns or remove themselves from a situation has been effective for some schools who have increased provision of 'safe spaces' for pupils to attend when they are overwhelmed. Flora Gardens Primary School asked pupils to put their water bottles inside a green, yellow or red hoop at the start of a lesson, to indicate how they were feeling. This gave children an opportunity to reflect on and communicate their emotions and provided a non-verbal marker for teachers of which children might need additional support.

Although communication remains an ongoing challenge, a key achievement mentioned is effective communication between staff. In many cases a whole school approach with all staff committed to delivering ARCs and has been highly effective. Headteachers have praised the involvement from teachers and believe staff cohesion and commitment to common goals to be key to their successful ARCs.

## COVID restrictions

School closures, extensive periods of home schooling and social distancing have had a profound impact on the routines, structure, friendships, opportunities, and freedom of young people. On return to school, continued restrictions to ensure social distancing and enhanced hygiene have had ongoing impacts on education. Schools are forced to constantly adapt and rethink their approaches, often at short notice. The need for equipment to be sterilised or quarantined between uses has required teachers to be well organised in advance of lessons to ensure what they need is available and has limited opportunities for spontaneity.

For some schools, regular activities such as swimming have been unavailable, and curriculums have been re-written to find alternatives. Maintaining pupil bubbles has enforced restrictions on activity group sizes and as a result, usable spaces in schools. Almost all schools were affected by sudden bubble closures during the summer term, with clear implications on staffing, difficulties in completing schemes of work, and staff feeling deflated, fearing positive progress for pupil wellbeing was being reversed. Other unsurmountable situational challenges include poor weather, and a lack of indoor and outdoor spaces for pupils to be simultaneously active.

## Achievements & overcoming challenges

“

*Trying to teach a range of sports within a topic to boost motivation and interest. Shifting the focus onto participation.*

Secondary school teacher

“

*A motivated staff team who want to provide positive opportunities for recovery.*

Primary school teacher

“

*Buy in from the whole school community.*

Primary school teacher

“

*Students arriving in PE kit so changing does not need to occur and students get more PE time.*

Secondary school teacher

“

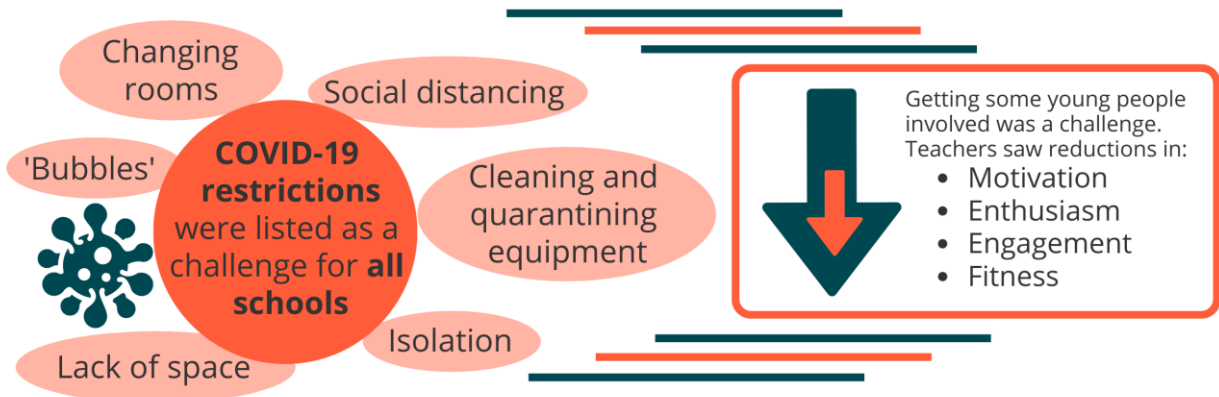
*Giving staff permission to focus on physical activity and not jumping into literacy and numeracy, I didn't want baseline testing, I think it would have done more damage.*

Secondary school teacher

Teacher Interviews & Teacher Survey



**Lack of time** was the **main challenge** listed by all schools in implementing an Active Recovery Curriculum



Secondary teachers reported ongoing communication issues between peers as face-to-face communication was replaced with virtual contact and social media during lockdown



**Teamwork**  
A whole school approach and cohesion between teachers has been key to successful ARC's

**Extra-curricular**  
Primary schools had great success increasing afterschool clubs offered and had high attendance at clubs

**Healthy lifestyle**  
Promoting the importance of being active and keeping fit has appealed to many pupils. Reduced focus on competitive sport

**Active Communities**  
Staff have become more engaged in PE and sport and some families are finding ways to be more active at home



## Embedding & Sustaining ARCs in Schools

Prior to the pandemic, physical activity was considered an important part of the ethos of schools in this research. As part of their ARCs, many schools have prioritised and allocated additional time and focus to being active and outdoors.

Within their ARCs, many primary schools adopted strategies that have now become part of their every day curriculum, and intend to maintain these into future academic years. The positive impact of incorporating physical activity every day on classroom learning has led to activities such as ‘the daily mile’, ‘pause for play’ and ‘wake and shake’ becoming stable features within primary school curriculums for all of the schools observed in this research.

Secondary schools cite ongoing struggles with pupil communication and confidence and intend to continue to use physical activity to address these. Schools recognise PE lessons as a valuable tool to enhance personal development and inter-personal skills, and improve understanding of the importance of physical fitness and mental health. Schools will continue to try to offer novel sports, outdoor activities and a mixture of team and individual opportunities to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to include something appealing for every pupil.

While time within the school day is always limited and precious, many schools have found extracurricular activities to be an effective way to offer more physical activity and more choice to pupils. Extracurricular activities contribute to improving personal development skills and self efficacy, and also increase opportunities for young people to accumulate minutes of physical activity to meet guideline recommendations, and develop healthy habits.

Following their ARCs, teachers and headteachers have reported ongoing plans to host special events, bring in external coaches and athletes, undergo internal CPD, arrange competitive fixtures and spend more time outdoors in the next academic year.

While the longer term impacts of COVID-19 on physical health, mental and emotional wellbeing and academic progression of young people remain unknown, schools intend to continue to monitor progress and respond to specific needs of their pupils into the next academic year. All schools are extremely positive about the impact of their ARCs and intend to continue to explore approaches to increase physical activity at school.

### Next Steps

“

*We are going to keep getting external people in, giving the children sporting role models.*

Primary school teacher

“

*We will be keeping the extra clubs. Introducing disability sports – Extra CPD for staff to do this. Getting the children some fixtures.*

Primary school teacher

“

*We have had very few pupils not taking part due to PE kit. Very few safeguarding issues in changing rooms... Uptake in lessons is the best it's been in a long time. I'm currently pushing with SLT to keep that going.*

Secondary school teacher

“

*Outdoor lessons: We will definitely be carrying this on. Why learn about plants and nature inside when you have plants and bugs outside. Children thrive in these situations. They are happier outside and you can't put a price on that.*

Primary school teacher

Teacher Interviews & Teacher Survey



## Secure support from the wider school community

A whole school approach encourages teachers across the curriculum to incorporate activity and time outdoors and become active role models for pupils.

## Encourage activity everyday

Habitually being active everyday with a 'wake and shake', 'Daily Mile' or extracurricular activities helps pupils establish lifelong routines and recognise the impact of activity on their learning.



## Focus on health and lifestyle

Prioritising activity participation and enjoyment is most effective in motivating many pupils and inspiring them to pursue healthy habits, new hobbies, and physical activities at home.

## Explain why PE is useful

Demonstrating how skills transfer across and beyond sports enables pupils to see the relevance of their engagement and the applicability of skills and attributes gained to wider scenarios.



## Incorporate mental health

Encouraging pupils to reflect on their emotions improves self awareness, their ability to recognise when they are finding things difficult, their coping strategies and their empathy for others.

## Run special events

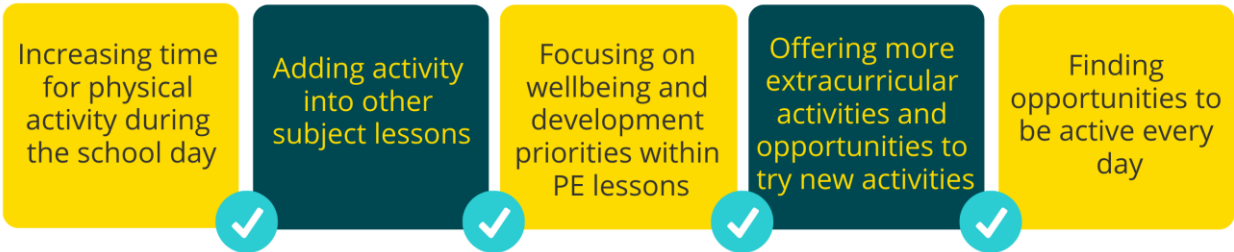
Opportunities to try different activities, be coached by different people and visit new places helps pupils expand their comfort zones and gain confidence communicating with new people.



## Share best practice, activity ideas and resources

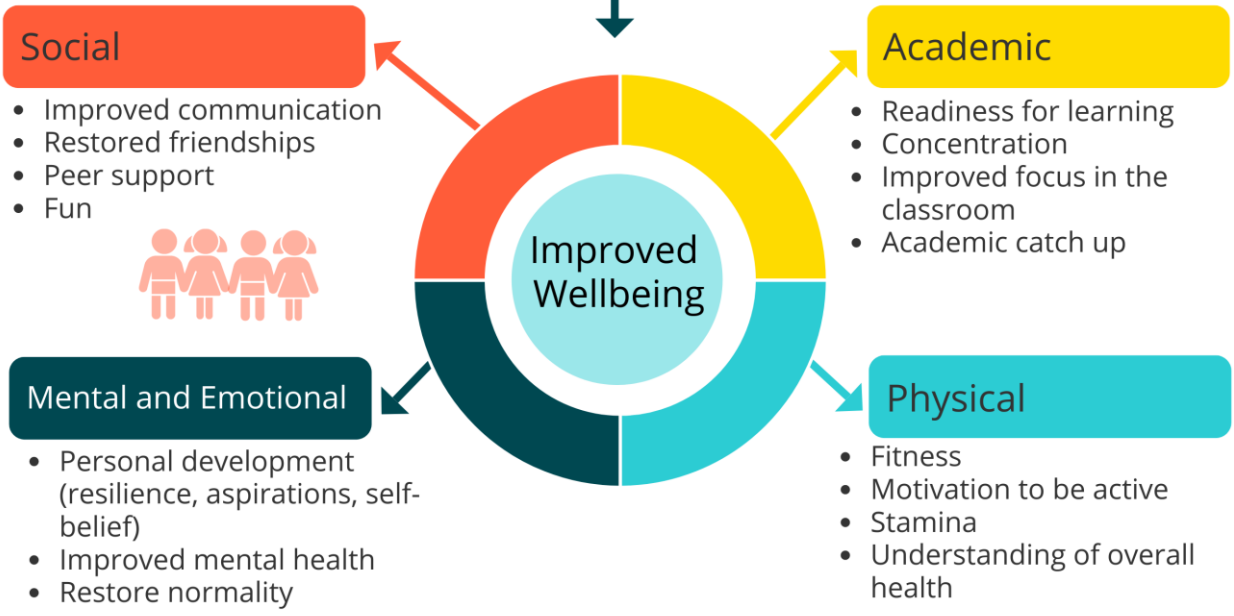
Sharing ideas and showcasing good practice within and between schools helps develop more cohesive and collaborative ways of implementing, embedding and sustaining an active curriculum.

Schools implemented Active Recovery Curriculums by:

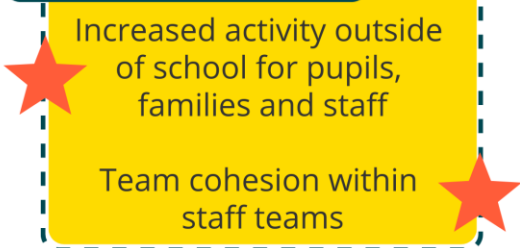


Increases in time spent being active and outdoors at school  
Increases in physical activity since returning to school

Resulted in...



Wider outcomes





# Appendix A

## Pupil Survey data

*We want to find out how you think and feel since coming out of lockdown. Since returning to school after the Easter holidays, how have the following changed?*

	A lot better	A bit better	No change	A bit worse	A lot worse	Don't know
My resilience: if I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it	22%	46%	23%	4%	2%	3%
My empathy: I am able to understand how other people are feeling	31%	38%	25%	2%	1%	3%
My self-belief: I feel confident in my own abilities	26%	33%	21%	11%	6%	3%
My aspirations: I feel I can achieve anything I want	23%	33%	27%	7%	6%	4%
My happiness with the relationships I have with my friends and family	42%	21%	21%	9%	5%	2%
My progress at school	25%	41%	19%	9%	2%	4%

*Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?*

Not at all 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely 10
3%	3%	4%	4%	9%	13%	10%	15%	17%	7%	15%

### ***Being Healthy & Active...***

*In the past week, on how many days have you taken part in 60 minutes or more of physical activity that makes you feel warmer and your heartbeat faster?*

No days	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days
6%	10%	14%	18%	12%	14%	8%	18%

*Since returning to school after the Easter holidays, how has your physical activity changed?*

Increased a lot	Increased a little	No change	Decreased a little	Decreased a lot	Can't say
26%	45%	17%	7%	4%	1%

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't say
I enjoy taking part in exercise and sports	47%	38%	7%	4%	4%
I feel confident when I exercise and play sports	32%	40%	16%	8%	4%
I find exercise and sports easy	18%	41%	26%	5%	10%
I understand why exercise and sports are good for me	62%	34%	1%	2%	1%
I like doing exercise and sports at school	45%	33%	13%	4%	5%
Doing exercise and sports at school helps me learn	31%	43%	17%	5%	4%
I want to do more exercise and sports in school	43%	29%	14%	7%	7%
I like having lessons outside	53%	35%	5%	2%	5%

### A bit more About You...

Are you a...

Boy	43%
Girl	53%
Other	1%
Prefer not to say	3%

Age

8	5%
9	8%
10	19%
11	12%
12	5%

13	4%
14	29%
15	16%
16	1%

Which one of these best describes your background or ethnicity?

White (British or English)	70%
White (not British or English)	2%
Mixed	6%
Asian or Asian British	11%
Black or Black British	3%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	3%
Don't know	3%

Do you have a disability, or a special educational need, which means you need extra help to do things?

Yes	6%
No	71%
Prefer not to say	12%
Don't know	11%

Do your parents have to pay if you have school meals?

Yes	53%
No	22%
Prefer not to say	9%
Don't know	16%



# Appendix B

## Active Recovery Curriculum activities

- Active hour
- ASPIRE Day
- Athletics
- Art outside
- Battle re-enactment role play
- Catch the flag
- Curriculum PE
- Daily mile
- Dodgeball
- Fractions/maths outside
- Futsal
- Inter-house tournaments
- Jump Start Jonny subscription videos
- Multi-sport extracurricular clubs
- Nature walks
- Orienteering
- Pause for Play activity breaks
- Quidditch
- REACTIVE-8 physical activity intervention
- Shakeout activities
- Visiting local sports clubs
- Wake and Shake
- Yoga

ARC activities can also be found on Youth Sport Trust's Active Recovery Hub:  
<https://www.yourschoolgames.com/active-recovery/>