

# SPEAR

SPORT, PHYSICAL EDUCATION  
& ACTIVITY RESEARCH

**Youth Sport Trust**

**2014/15 Skills2Play/Sport  
Programme Evaluation**

**Final Report**

**July 2015**

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## HEADLINES

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### PROGRAMME DELIVERY

- *All respondents to the Deliverer Survey<sup>1</sup> (100%) reported that the activity cards were useful to delivery and nearly all (99%) found the equipment useful.*
  - *Almost half of schools responding to the Deliverer Survey ran Skills2Play/Sport sessions during lunchtime, around 40% during lesson time and 40% after school, with some running at more than one time.*
  - *Data from school visits and telephone interviews suggest that the extent to which programme aims are successfully conveyed to participants is largely dependent upon the deliverers' understanding of physical literacy, rather than their experience of delivering PE.*
  - *Respondents to the Deliverer Survey rated the 'fun' aspect of the programme (100%), the equipment (99%) and the activity cards (96%) most effective in engaging children.*
  - *Responses to the Deliverer Survey and data from school visits indicate that children's progress in physical literacy is not being widely measured by schools.*
  - *In addition to adding to PE and school sport provision, over 80% of respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported that the programme had added to school's healthy lifestyle offer and 65% highlighted value added to delivery across the curriculum.*
- 

### PROGRAMME IMPACT

- *In all three KS1 visit schools, the physical literacy of participating children was observed to have developed over the 12 week period.*
  - *Observations of movement skills of KS1 participants showed improvements in stability, object control and locomotion; these improvements were most noticeable in the youngest children (Year 1) and those initially demonstrating lower levels of physical literacy.*
  - *Over the 12 week period in all KS1 visit schools, improvements were observed and reported (by both participants and deliverers) in children's confidence, social skills, creativity and resilience.*
  - *Data from the Children's Survey show a statistically significant increase between weeks 1 and 12 in the number of KS2 children undertaking at least 60 minutes of physical activity.*
  - *Children's Survey data show statistically significant increases between weeks 1 and 12 in the behaviour, confidence, knowledge and understanding of KS2 participants.*
  - *KS2 Children's Survey data show that levels of motivation were high and attitudes were positive at week 1 and remained so at week 12.*
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<sup>1</sup> The Deliverer Survey examines delivery of both Skills2Play and Skills2PlaySport.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Ensure training emphasises the physical literacy aims of the programme to achieve consistency in schools' delivery and maximise programme outcomes.*
  2. *Include clear guidance in the training on measuring progress in physical literacy to encourage assessment of outcomes and aid delivery within the curriculum.*
  3. *Emphasise the cross-curricular aspects of the programme to encourage schools to embed Skills2Play/Sport and enhance its sustainability.*
  4. *Continue evaluation through 2015/16 to increase sample sizes and enhance the robustness of evidence to inform programme development.*
-

## 1) CONTEXT

### 1.1) ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Primary School Physical Literacy Framework reflects the importance of the development of children's physical literacy; "the motivation, confidence, knowledge and understanding that provides children with the movement foundation for lifelong participation in physical activity."<sup>2</sup> It also provides clear guidance as to how schools can maximise opportunities to develop the physical literacy of their pupils. Skills2Play and Skills2PlaySport are two complementary primary school physical literacy initiatives designed to support the objectives of the new Framework. Together they comprise the Skills2Play/Sport programme. Throughout this report the term Skills2Play/Sport refers to the programme, comprising both initiatives (Skills2Play and Skills2PlaySport). The programme consists of training and a resource and equipment package, which includes activity cards for both Skills2Play (blue cards) and Skills2PlaySport (purple cards) supplied to primary school deliverers by the Youth Sport Trust. Skills2Play is targeted at Key Stage 1 (KS1) and focuses on generic skill development through a range of play activities that focus on stability, object control and locomotion. Skills2PlaySport is targeted at lower Key Stage 2 (KS2) and includes multi-skill activities that build from the generic skills but also introduce the connectivity with the sports through the development of skills specific to sporting 'themes', namely 'Invasion', 'Striking and Fielding' and 'Net/Wall'. Further themes are currently at varying stages of development and include 'Aquatics', 'Gymnastics', 'Athletics' and 'Wheels'.

### 1.2) ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (SPEAR) was commissioned by the Youth Sport Trust to conduct an independent evaluation of the Skills2Play/Sport programme between January 2014 and July 2015. The initial stages of the evaluation focused on the pilot programme undertaken in fifty primary schools. In May 2014 SPEAR produced the Pilot Evaluation Report, which captured teachers' experiences of the training, resources and delivery of the Skills2Play/Sport pilot programme. The programme was then rolled out to 1,000 schools nationally and the objectives of the Evaluation of the national Skills2Play/Sport programme were as follows:

1. *To assess how Skills2PlaySport and Skills2Play are being delivered and sustained in primary schools to support children's physical literacy development.*
2. *To investigate the impact of Skills2PlaySport on the development of lower Key Stage 2 children's physical literacy over 12 weeks of the programme.*
3. *To investigate the impact of Skills2Play on the development of Key Stage 1 children's physical literacy over 12 weeks of the programme.*

This Final Report provides an assessment of programme delivery and assessment of impact on both Key Stage 1 and 2 children. Recommendations to support the development of the programme are also presented and case studies provided in appendices D and E.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/5174173/physical\\_literacy\\_framework.pdf](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/media/5174173/physical_literacy_framework.pdf)

The methodological approach developed for this evaluation aimed to examine the delivery of the Skills2Play/Sport programme and to assess the impact of the programme on children’s physical literacy. The approach combined self-report measures with direct observations and perceptions of impact and delivery. Sample size for the Children’s Survey is based on a maximum margin of error less than +/- 5%. Table 1.1 provides a summary of the research undertaken for the evaluation.

**Table 1.1) Summary of research process**

Research	Process and samples achieved
<b>Relationship management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed <i>relationship management strategy implemented with 14 schools</i> to facilitate survey completion and return.</li> </ul>
<b>Repeated-measures survey of KS2 children participating in Skills2PlaySport</b> (Target sample = 300)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>424 surveys returned at Week 1 and analysed.</b></li> <li><b>343 surveys returned at Week 12 and analysed.</b></li> <li><b>350 repeated-measures surveys from 175 respondents analysed.*</b></li> <li><b>767 cross-sectional surveys from 584 respondents analysed.*</b></li> </ul>
<b>Telephone interviews with deliverers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Telephone interviews conducted with 172 Skills2Play/Sport deliverers</b> to assess plans for delivery and as part of ongoing relationship management with schools recruited to Panel.</li> <li><b>Analysis of data from 172 deliverers</b> from telephone interviews to provide preliminary insights for Interim Report (response rate=36%)<sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-sectional Deliverer Survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Online survey of Skills2Play/Sport deliverers administered</b> to all 732 deliverable contacts supplied by YST - to examine perceptions of delivery, sustainability and impact.</li> <li><b>Data from 104 Skills2Play/Sport deliverers analysed</b> (response rate=14%).</li> </ul>
<b>Pilot schools follow-up Deliverer Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Online open-ended questions to gain feedback from Skills2Play/Sport deliverers administered to 18 pilot schools</b> to examine development of Skills2Play/Sport in small sample of schools since participation in pilot programme.</li> <li><b>Responses achieved from agreed sample (10 schools) and analysed</b> to provide insights – included in the Interim Report (response rate=56%).</li> </ul>
<b>Visits to schools delivering Skills2Play with KS1 children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Visits made to 3 schools at Week 1 and again at Week 12</b> to assess delivery, sustainability and impact.</li> <li><b>Data analysed and Case Studies produced.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Visits to schools delivering Skills2PlaySport with KS2 children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Visits made to 3 schools</b> at Week 6 to assess delivery, sustainability and impact.</li> <li><b>Data analysed and Case Studies produced.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Secondary Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YST post-training evaluation data analysed. No children’s monitoring data available; YST addressing in 2015/16.</li> </ul>

\*see appendix C: methodological note

<sup>3</sup> Total of 1130 deliverers trained in year 2014/15 (YST data); 472 deliverer contacts supplied by YST Nov 2014-Jan 2015. See appendix C methodological note for further details.

## 2) PROGRAMME DELIVERY

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### HEADLINES

- *All respondents to the Deliverer Survey<sup>4</sup> (100%) reported that the activity cards were useful to delivery and nearly all (99%) found the equipment useful.*
  - *Almost half of schools responding to the Deliverer Survey ran Skills2Play/Sport sessions during lunchtime, around 40% during lesson time and 40% after school, with some running at more than one time.*
  - *Data from school visits and telephone interviews suggest that the extent to which programme aims are successfully conveyed to participants is largely dependent upon the deliverers' understanding of physical literacy, rather than their experience of delivering PE.*
  - *Respondents to the Deliverer Survey rated the 'fun' aspect of the programme (100%), the equipment (99%) and the activity cards (96%) most effective in engaging children.*
  - *Responses to the Deliverer Survey and data from school visits indicate that children's progress in physical literacy is not being widely measured by schools.*
  - *In addition to adding to PE and school sport provision, over 80% of respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported that the programme had added to school's healthy lifestyle offer and 65% highlighted value added to delivery across the curriculum.*
- 

In this section data is analysed from responses to the Deliverer Survey (n=104), school visits (n=6) and telephone interviews (n=172) to provide an assessment of how Skills2Play/Sport is being delivered and sustained in schools to support children's physical literacy development.

Before assessing the ways in which Skills2Play/Sport is being delivered in schools and its impact on both deliverers and participating children, it is useful to examine schools' reasons for undertaking the Skills2Play/Sport training and deciding to run the programme.

### 2.1) The appeal of the programme

A number of themes are apparent in responses to the Deliverer Survey in relation to why schools decided to deliver Skills2Play/Sport, and these are reflective of the aims of the programme: the desire to involve all children in physical activity, to aid the development of children's skills – both physical and social/emotional (confidence, leadership, teamwork) - and to provide fun activities within the curriculum or at lunchtime. Whilst some aspects directly referred to (such as confidence) and others inferred (such as motivation) are encompassed by physical literacy, it is notable that none of the respondents specifically cited their aims as including the development of children's 'physical literacy'. Illustrative examples are provided in panel 2.1.

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<sup>4</sup> The Deliverer Survey examines delivery of both Skills2Play and Skills2PlaySport.

## Panel 2.1) Deliverers' objectives (Deliverer Survey)

*To develop my skills in teaching and delivering PE to my class (KS1) and to subsequently improve the quality and progression of learning and skills for the children.*

*I am based at a special school...we have lots of behaviour issues and wanted something that staff could do during break and lunch that would be productive for the pupils.*

*We wanted to use the development of physical skills to help support emotional and social development.*

*To engage more children in activities during lunchtimes. To use our play leaders to run the activities at lunchtime for both KS1 and KS2.*

*To embed PE more across school day.*

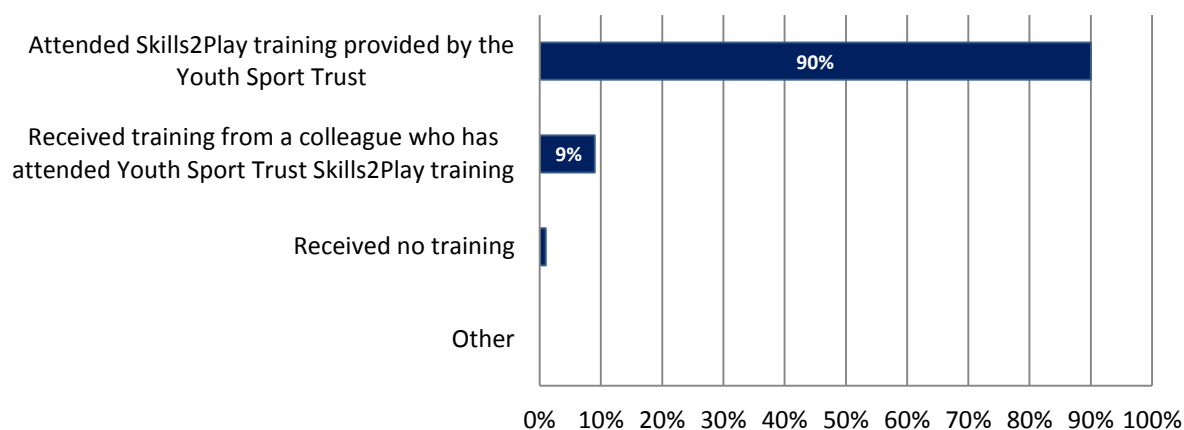
*Fun activities that meet curriculum objectives.*

*Children were not confident or naturally interested to participate also to encourage team play.*

*To try and get children of all abilities involved in sports and to improve their skills.*

## 2.2) About the training

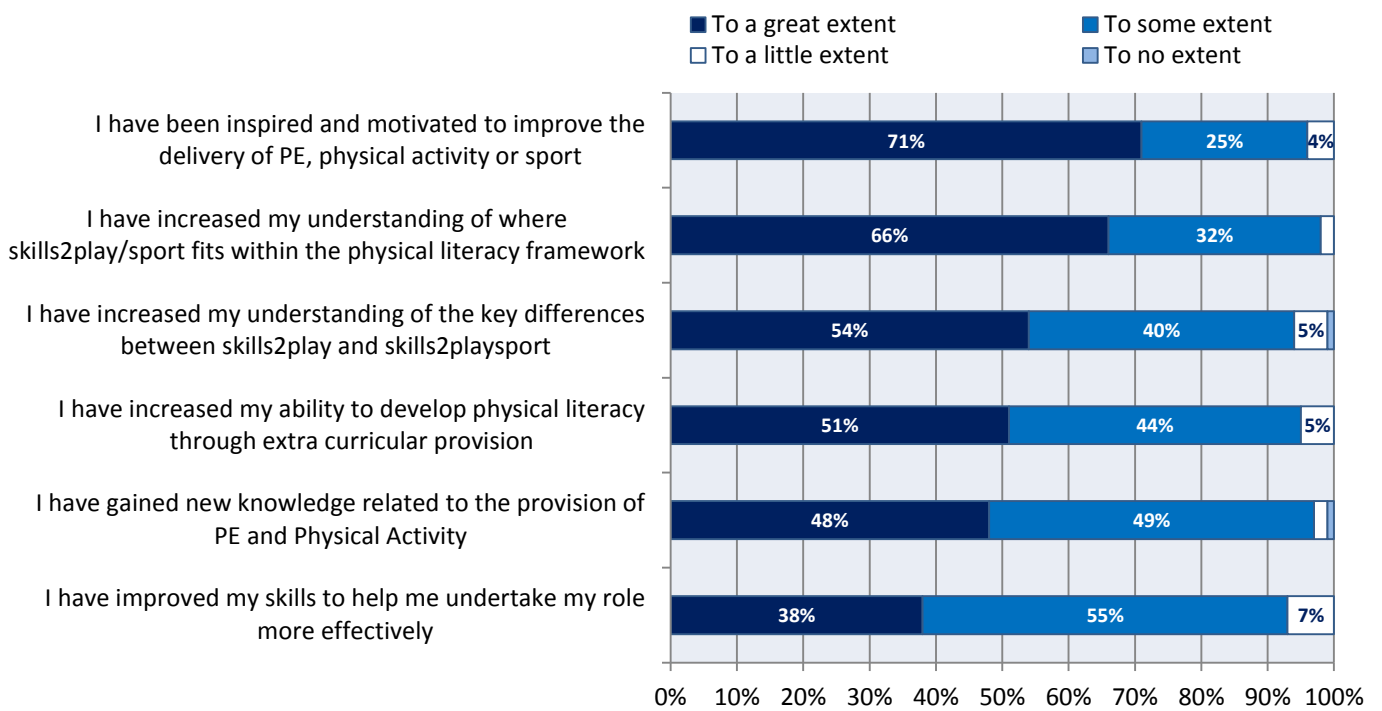
Nearly all respondents to the Deliverer Survey had attended the Youth Sport Trust's Skills2Play/Sport training, which was rated highly by respondents and second only to the equipment and activity cards in terms of its usefulness to delivering sessions (figures 2.1 and 2.4).



**Figure 2.1) Training received by respondents (n=101)**

Data provided by the Youth Sport Trust shows that 1130 teachers attended Skills2Play/Sport training in 2014/15. The Youth Sport Trust undertakes its own evaluation of training by requesting feedback from participants. Data in relation to this has therefore been supplied by the Youth Sport Trust and suggests that deliverers attending training gained knowledge, skills and motivation. In particular, 95% of respondents reported an increased ability to develop physical literacy through extra-curricular provision and 98% reported an increased understanding of where Skills2Play/Sport fits within the physical literacy framework 'to a great extent' or 'to some extent'. Responses are shown in figure 2.2.



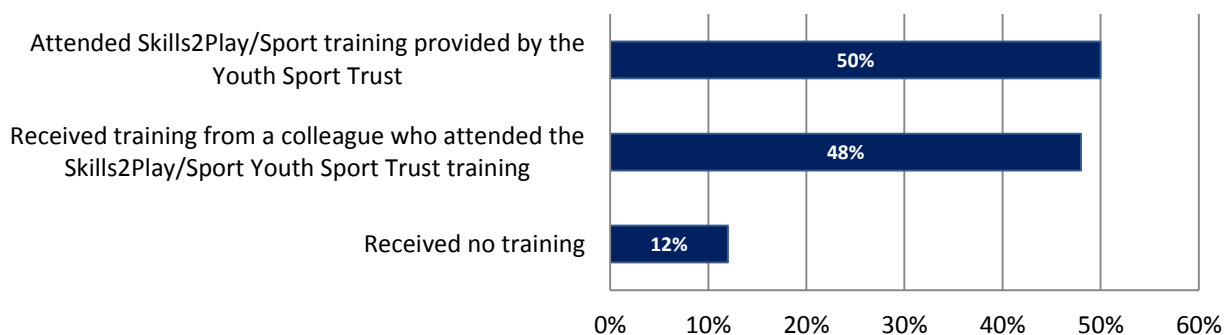


**Figure 2.2) Responses to YST post-training evaluation (n=182)**

In addition, qualitative responses to the Youth Sport Trust’s post-training survey suggest three other ‘themes’ of benefits widely experienced by those undertaking Skills2Play/Sport training: they gained ideas; their confidence increased; and they enhanced their ability to pass these ideas and confidence on to others, including non-specialist staff and young leaders.

As a result of the training, responses to the Youth Sport Trust evaluation suggest that while some deliverers intended to incorporate Skills2Play into lunchtime activities, others planned to review their curriculum provision with the aim of ‘injecting more creativity’, ‘including multi-skills work’, providing ‘more skill-based lessons’ or enhancing ‘differentiation between skills and sport specific teaching’ (see also figure 2.7 relating to SPEAR’s Deliverer Survey data).

Almost half of respondents to SPEAR’s Deliverer Survey reported that other deliverers in their school had received training from someone who had themselves attended the Youth Sport Trust training. This suggests that in almost half the schools surveyed, knowledge and understanding of Skills2Play/Sport had been disseminated within the school (figure 2.3).



**Figure 2.3) Training received by all deliverers in respondents’ schools (n=76)**

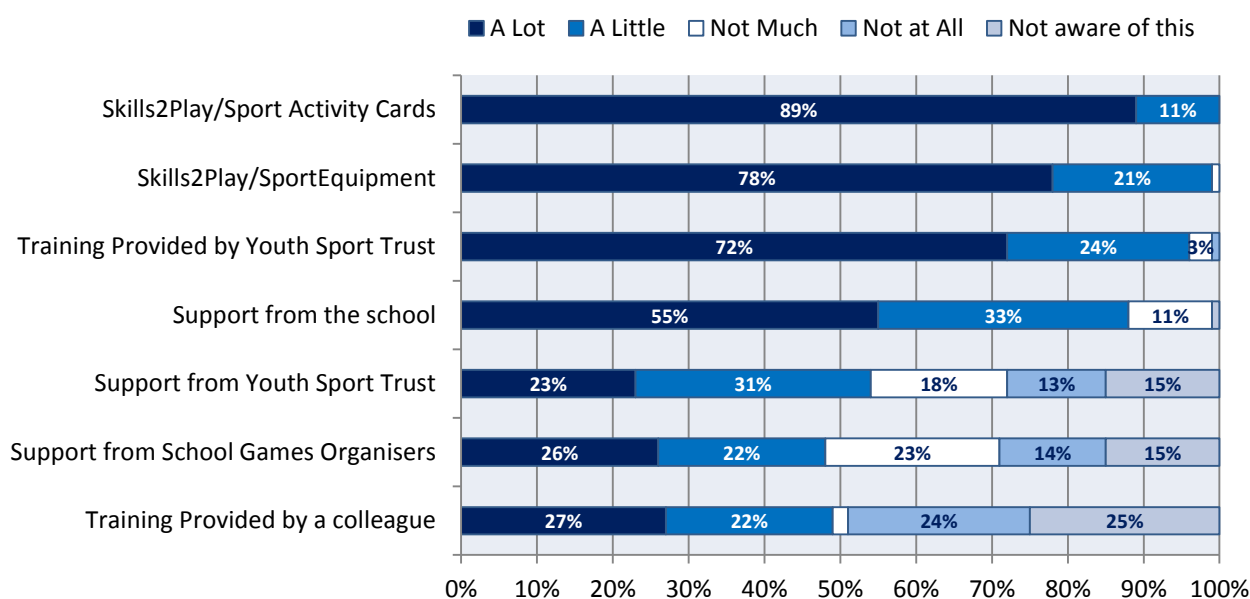
Deliverers at visit schools commented favourably on their ability to train and mentor colleagues and pupils to deliver sessions. The deliverers at schools visited by SPEAR cited the ‘simplicity/ usability’ of the programme and the usefulness of the activity cards as enabling ease of delivery by non-PE specialist staff and young leaders. The deliverer at one school stated that teaching assistants would be enabled to lead/assist with physical activity sessions by the clear guidance on the activity cards, despite their previous lack of confidence to deliver. At another school, the deliverer noted that children could also be enabled to deliver sessions. Indeed at 5 of the 6 visit schools, sessions were being delivered with the assistance of a teaching assistant and/or young leaders:

*When I got to the training I really liked the whole ethos behind the programme... and when I saw the resource cards I felt that this could be exactly what we need; something that any teacher could deliver, and perhaps even the children.*

(Head teacher, Shoreham Village School)

### 2.3) About the resources and equipment

Figure 2.4 shows that **all respondents to the Deliverer Survey (100%) reported that the activity cards were useful to delivery and nearly all (99%) found the equipment useful.**



**Figure 2.4) Aspects of the programme found useful by deliverers (n=76)**

The term ‘useful’ here does not fully convey deliverers’ enthusiasm for the equipment and in particular the activity cards, expressed both in qualitative responses to the Deliverer Survey and in interviews with lead deliverers at visit schools. Deliverers particularly praised the clarity and ease of use of the cards and the ability of the resources to keep children engaged, as shown in the illustrative examples provided in panel 2.2

## Panel 2.2) Deliverers' comments on resources (Deliverer Survey & Visit Schools)

*There are a lot of different resources to the ones we currently have within the school and that again is going to inspire the children, opening their eyes to the wider range things that are available within sport.*

*Resources easy to use and children really engaged. They particularly like even at KS1 the scope to make up their own challenges within the general targets of activities on each card - and have come up with some really good ideas.*

*Cards are clear and quick to use. Good range of resources which are motivating to children.*

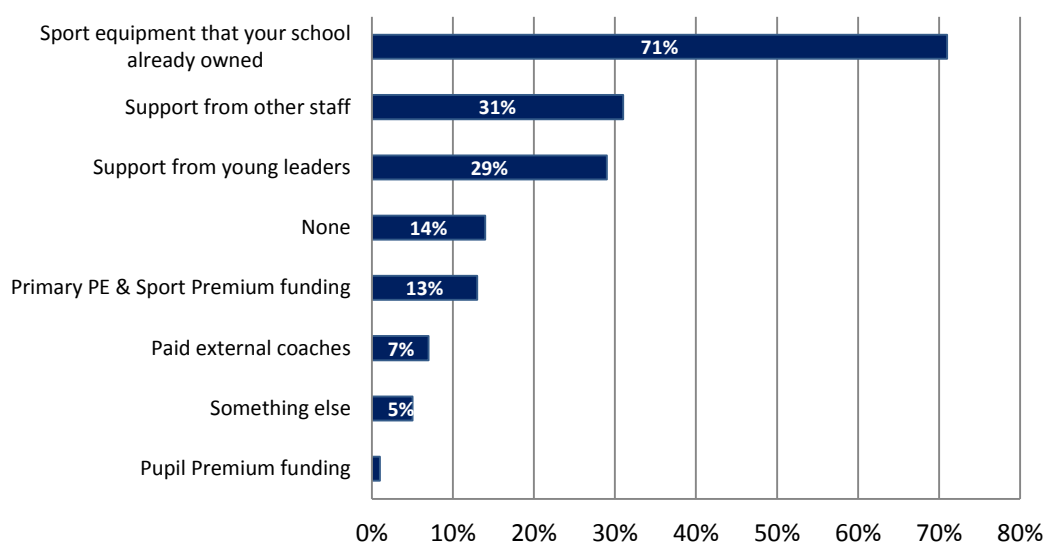
*Great resources provided, including the activity cards, increased my confidence and has broken down the skills needed for sport.*

*Cards have given teachers confidence to deliver lessons with relevant content that will enable pupils to progress and develop physical literacy.*

*The skills2play cards are great in helping to give us ideas and skills to work on and fun & interesting ways to deliver them.*

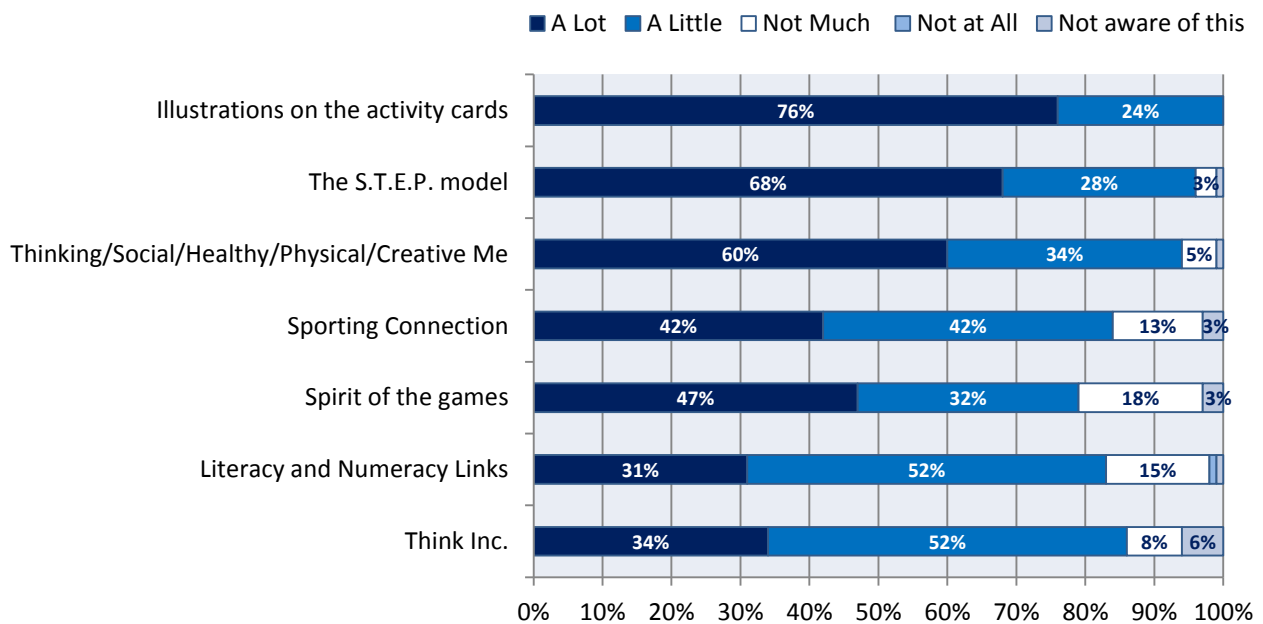
The vast majority of comments relating to equipment are reflected in the positive terms illustrated above; three critical comments were received in relation to the equipment (two during telephone interviews and one during a school visit) and these related to the amount of equipment being insufficient rather than to its quality as one deliverer explained: *"It sometimes feels like the equipment is token and there isn't always enough to do what you need or want with the number of children you have"* (Deliverer, Hernhill Primary School).

Indeed, data from the Deliverer Survey suggests that just over 70% of respondents reported using sport equipment already owned by the school to supplement the Skills2Play/Sport equipment provided by the programme (figure 2.5).



**Figure 2.5) Resources used to support Skills2Play/Sport (n=76)**

The Deliverer Survey also asked respondents to rate specific aspects of the activity cards in terms of their usefulness, and responses are shown in figure 2.6. The illustrations on the cards were rated most highly (100% of respondents reporting that they found these useful), followed closely by the S.T.E.P. model (96%) and the Thinking Me, Social Me, Healthy Me, Physical Me, Creative Me section (94%). Over 80% of respondents reported that the Literacy and Numeracy Links and the Think Inc. aspects of the activity cards were useful and this was well demonstrated in one of the visit schools delivering Skills2Play to Key Stage 1 children. At this school, there was a strong focus on the cross-curricular aspects of the session, successfully incorporating maths and geography into the activities (Torpoint Nursery & Infant School in section 3, see also appendix D).



**Figure 2.6) Usefulness of aspects of activity cards (n=76)**

The popularity of the activity cards was widely reported in the Deliverer Survey and during interviews with deliverers (figure 2.4, panel 2.2, appendices D and E). All deliverers interviewed during visits to schools commented positively on the activity cards in relation to enabling delivery (by PE specialists and non-specialists alike), facilitating leadership by young people and ownership by participating children, engaging the children, and enhancing sustainability. Illustrative comments from deliverers at visit schools are provided in panel 2.3.

**Panel 2.3) Deliverers’ perceptions of the value of the activity cards (Visit Schools)**

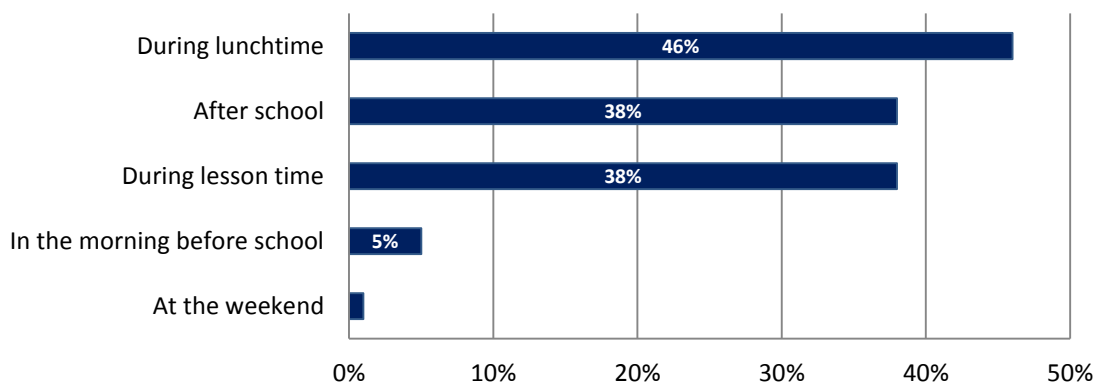
*I think (Skills2Play) will embed a love of learning; definitely for PE because I think the cards are really interesting for the children...it will also help focus the teachers when they are teaching PE lessons.*

*I can’t stress enough how valuable I think the cards can be. Most of our teachers don’t come from ‘sporty backgrounds’ so the cards will really help them deliver the activities...I particularly like the STEPs.*

*They (the cards) are quite easy to read and understand for the sports leaders because it’s step by step – allowing them to lead the majority of the session – even when the kids take a look at the cards they know what they are doing straight away.*

## 2.4) Timing

Figure 2.7 shows that **almost half of schools responding to the Deliverer Survey were running Skills2Play/Sport sessions during lunchtime, approximately 40% were taking place during lesson time and 40% after school, with some running at more than one time.**



**Figure 2.7) Time of day Skills2Play/Sport sessions ran (n=84)**

Data from the Deliverer Survey suggests that the programme is widely being used in schools to provide structured lunchtime activities as well as providing after school clubs for Key Stage 1 children and being embedded within curriculum PE lessons. Figure 2.7 shows the time of day sessions were delivered and illustrative comments in relation to this are provided in panel 2.4. However, some issues with delivery within the school day were highlighted by deliverers at visit schools. In one visit school, the deliverer expressed concerns about the lack of time and space afforded to the Skills2PlaySport lunchtime club and about the impact this had upon the children's progress:

*I literally only have 25 minutes, and that is not enough time to do everything I would like to do with them. They might be starting to understand what to do and go through one progression, but then it's time to go back in the classroom. On top of that, we have such a small area to use that half the activities don't really work in this space, so there are some skills that we won't get a chance to work on.*

(Higher level teaching assistant deliverer, Shoreham Village School)

In another visit school the deliverer stated that, whilst sessions currently ran after school, he aimed to embed the programme within curriculum PE for both Key Stage 1 and 2 children in the longer term. However, he expressed concerns about not knowing how to do so and suggested that guidance on this would be helpful. In the visit school where sessions were being delivered during curriculum time, whilst the deliverer stated the longer-term aim of all teachers using Skills2Play in PE lessons, she nevertheless expressed concerns held by colleagues regarding the adaptation of existing lessons.

## Panel 2.4) Delivery within the school day (Deliverer Survey)

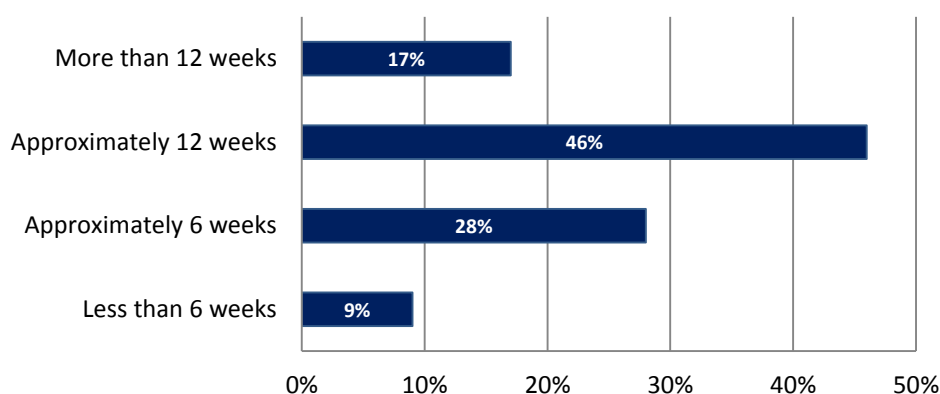
*The skills to play resources give a well-rounded multi-skills approach to learning which is easy to use and easily adaptable to school PE.*

*A free resource available to assist with both PE teaching and learning and also breaktime activities lead by our Year 6 'Play leaders'.*

*We use a different activity daily over the term in different areas. Keeping all our children active every lunchtime.*

*Taking part in Skills2Play was an opportunity for me to learn new skills to enable me to deliver differentiated activities during lunch time.*

Almost half of respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported running their Skills2Play/Sport sessions with the same group of children for approximately 12 weeks (the period shown by previous research evidence to optimise impact<sup>5</sup>). As figure 2.8 shows, over a third of respondents reported running sessions for approximately six weeks or less.



**Figure 2.8) Number of weeks sessions run with same children (n=86)**

Respondents reporting that their sessions ran for less than 12 weeks were asked to rate factors which had (or had not) influenced their decision. While the sample of respondents is small, it is still useful to consider their reasons. Figure 2.9 shows that three quarters stated lack of staff time had played a role in their choice of how long to run sessions for; almost three quarters stated that other clubs had taken priority and almost two thirds reported that there was no-one to run the sessions. Just over half of all respondents to this question stated that they were unaware of the requirement to run sessions for 12 weeks or more.

<sup>5</sup> Evaluation of Change4Life School Sports Clubs, SPEAR, 2011-2015; Evaluation of Pilot Skills2Play/Sport Programme, SPEAR, 2014.

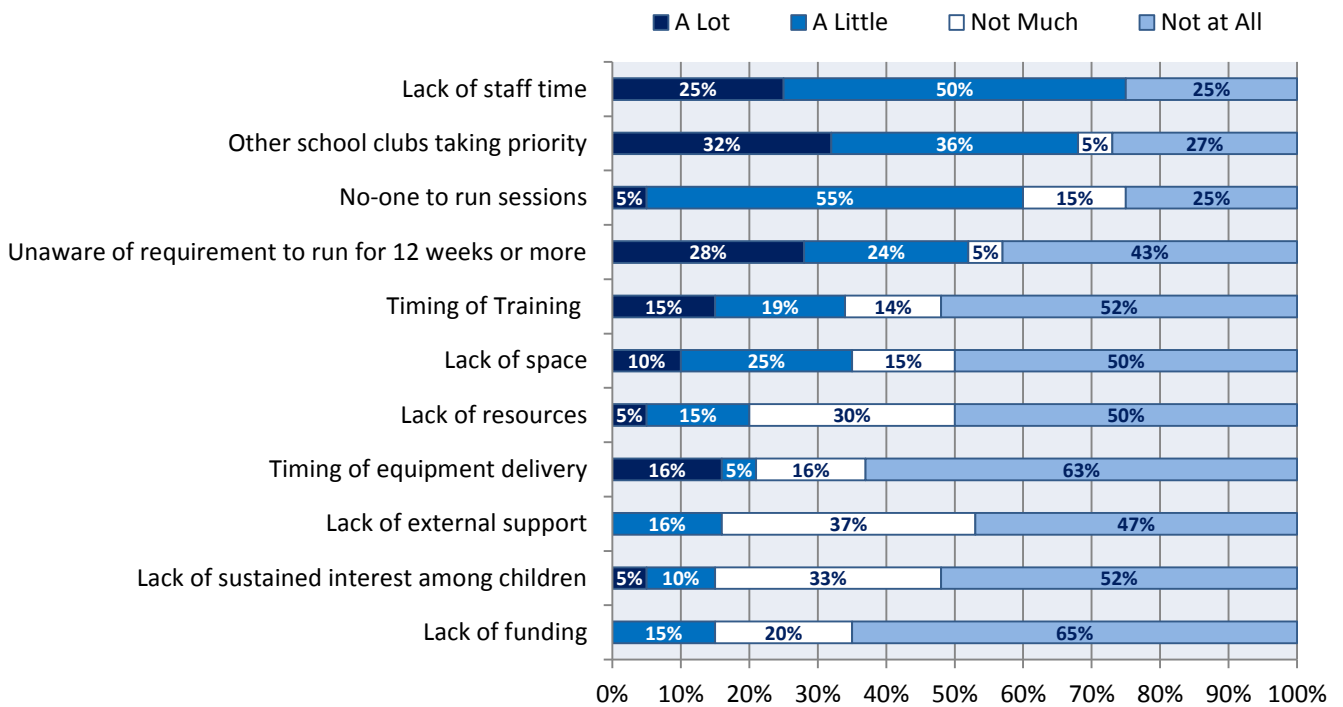


Figure 2.9) Deciding factors in running sessions for less than 12 weeks (n=23)

### 2.5) The deliverer

Responses to the Deliverer Survey shown in figure 2.10 suggest that almost two thirds of lead deliverers in schools are teachers and almost a quarter are PE specialists.

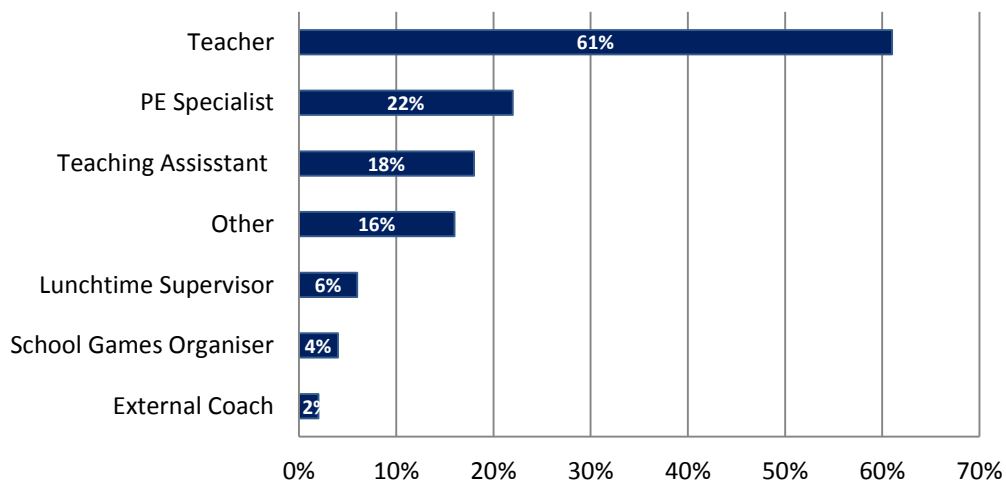


Figure 2.10) Respondent's role in school (n=100)

These data suggest that some teacher deliverers have specialist knowledge/experience in PE and it is perhaps not surprising that these members of school staff show an interest in programmes developed and resourced by the Youth Sport Trust. ***Data from school visits and telephone interviews suggest that the extent to which programme aims are successfully conveyed to participants is largely dependent upon the deliverers' understanding of physical literacy, rather than their experience of delivering PE.***

Indeed there are potential barriers to successful delivery of Skills2Play/Sport posed by a 'PE/sport-orientated mind set', expressed by one deliverer during a telephone interview:

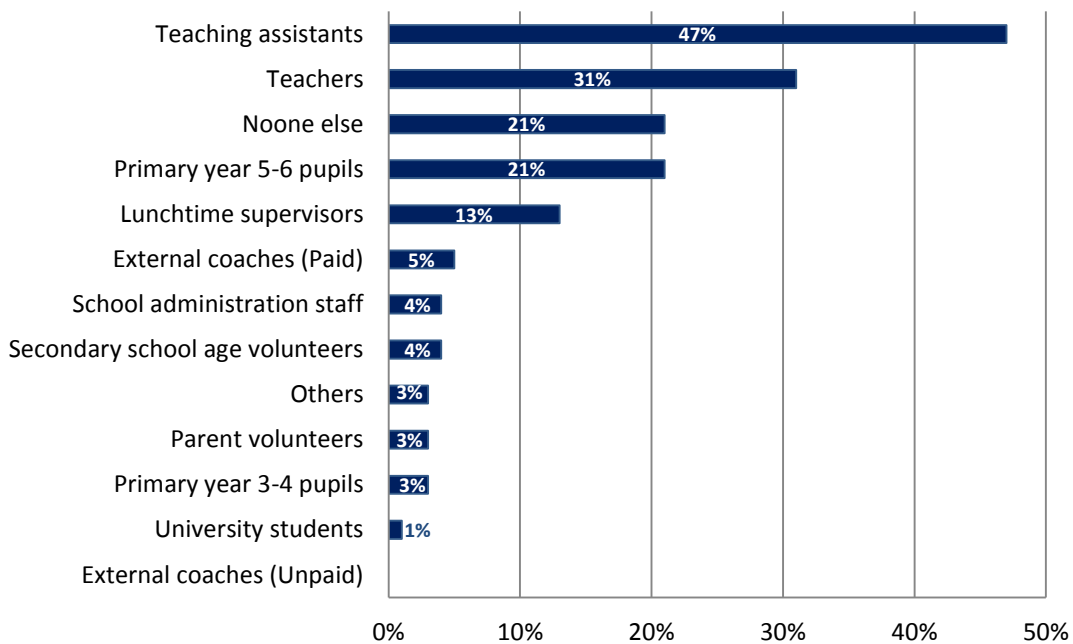
*Teachers, strangely particularly the ones that have sporting experience can sometimes find the tasks on the cards a little too simple. This is probably more to do with their mind set than the actual cards. In general there has been a positive response from all staff that have used the cards, they find them easy to follow and particularly like the links to PHSE, literacy and maths.*

(Teacher deliverer, telephone interview)

Evidence from school visits suggests that whilst PE experience can be useful in delivery, Skills2Play/Sport works best when the *physical literacy* aims of the programme are fully understood and expressed in delivery rather than a deliverer attempting to mould the programme to fit with pre-existing ideas of PE and school sport. In all three Skills2Play visit schools, the sessions were being led by a deliverer with PE or sports specialist knowledge/experience. At visit schools researchers observed variations in delivery, much of which could be attributed to the deliverer; their understanding of physical literacy, what they hoped to achieve with the programme and their methods of delivery. Researchers noted that whilst the deliverers experience and background tended to influence the 'flavour' of sessions at week 1, by week 12 all deliverers found that children enjoyed the sessions most where they were allowed a degree of ownership and that they made the most progress (specifically in movement skills and confidence) when their levels of enjoyment were highest. For example, where the development of sport-specific skills was the initial focus in one visit school, by week 12, sessions had evolved away from a competitive, 'scoring' ethos to a greater emphasis on 'fun' activities involving teamwork. The programme had been seen to develop the social and emotional skills of participants, with children demonstrating higher levels of confidence and abilities to verbalise and work as a team, and delivery had been adapted accordingly. In all visit schools, children had been given 'ownership' of the sessions (to varying degrees) and deliverers at these schools reported either being able to, or planning to, enlist the help of colleagues and/or young leaders in delivery. In one visit school the lead deliverer reported that the Multi-Skills Festival she had run in week 1 had not been successful; however in the second week she enlisted the help of the young leaders and the festival ran successfully (case studies in appendices D and E).

Data from the Deliverer Survey also suggests that teachers who attend the Youth Sport Trust training cascade the knowledge they have gained, training and mentoring others in the school to deliver Skills2Play/Sport sessions. As shown in figure 2.11 whilst almost two thirds of respondents were teachers, almost half reported that delivery of Skills2Play/Sport sessions was supported by teaching assistants, almost a third by other teachers and a fifth by Year 5 and 6 pupils.





**Figure 2.11) Role of assistants in delivery (n=78)**

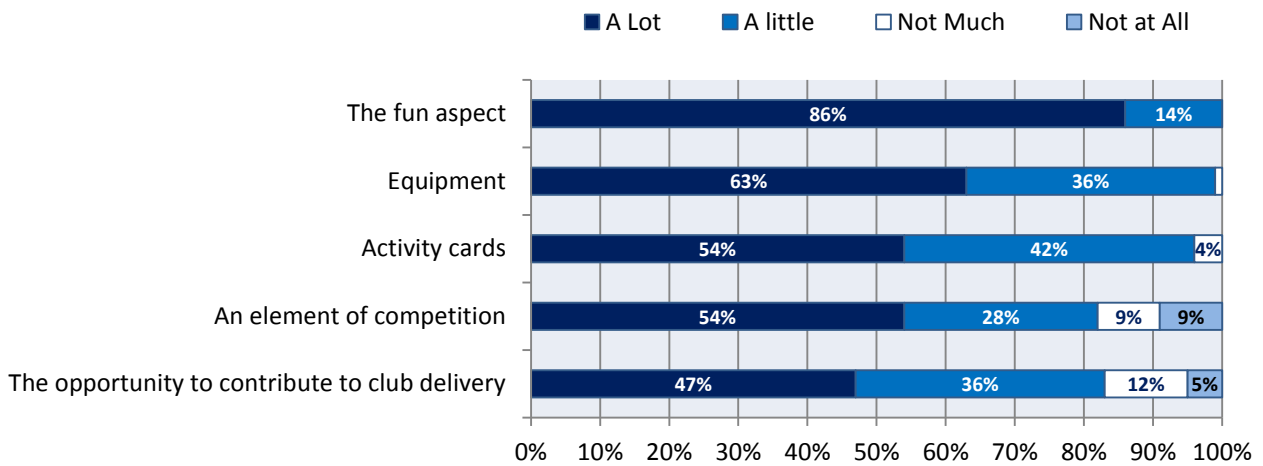
It is notable that very few schools are using external coaches to deliver Skills2Play/Sport (figures 2.10 and 2.11) and data from school visits and telephone interviews suggests this is largely due to the 'usability' of the programme; teachers, teaching assistants, other staff internal to the school, as well as older primary pupils report feeling competent and confident to deliver Skills2Play/Sport without the need for prior knowledge of PE or sport training:

*It is great because the young leaders can see the drawings of what the activity and the movements should look like and they can use that through the whole session to make sure they are helping the children progress.*

(External coach deliverer, Laddingford St Mary's C of E Primary School)

## 2.6) Engaging the children

**Respondents to the Deliverer Survey rated the 'fun' aspect of the programme (100%), the equipment (99%) and the activity cards (96%) most highly in relation to engaging the children** (figure 2.12), and this is supported by the qualitative data from school visits shown in panel 2.5 (further explored in appendices D and E).



**Figure 2.12) Aspects of the programme engaging children (n=76)**

It was evident during observations of Skills2Play/Sport sessions in visit schools that the fun element of the programme played a vital role in engaging children; the children frequently referred to the fun they had during sessions and this is further explored in sections 3 and 4 (and in the case studies in appendices D and E). Researchers particularly noted the enthusiasm of children and their desire to assist and encourage one another. Illustrative comments from children at visit schools are shown in panel 2.5.

**Panel 2.5) Children’s comments on the ‘fun’ aspect and teamwork (Visit Schools)**

*We help each other and it is fun to show each other what to do too.*

*We play new games every week and they are always fun!*

*Sometimes I help people and if they don’t know how to do it then I show them.*

*I am quite good at it so I like to help my friends...some of the games were harder and so they needed my help.*

*The club is brilliant, all the different activities we do make it fun and good!*

*I helped my whole team!*

Deliverers at visit schools highlighted the inclusive nature of the programme and those delivering to Key Stage 1 children welcomed the opportunity to do so, reporting that prior to Skills2Play they had struggled to find appropriate physical activities to run as sessions or clubs for this age group. At one of the Key Stage 2 visit schools, over half of participants had learning difficulties. The deliverer noted that although progression of movement skills had been slow, the club had provided opportunities for the children to work together, have fun and be active, and she believed that the inclusion of young leaders in the club would enhance its ability to progress children’s movement skills (appendix E). Panel 2.6 provides illustrative comments from the Deliverer Survey in relation to the inclusive nature of the programme and its facilitation of differentiated activities.

**Panel 2.6) Deliverers' comments on the inclusive nature of programme (Deliverer Survey)**

*Working in a special needs school we are always on the look out for new strategies to encourage children to interact with peers and develop new skills.*

*We wanted to get the children in Reception involved in physical activity and many of the after school sports clubs are not suitable for their age group.*

*To actively engage pupils at lower key stage.*

*Fun and accessible to all. Children really enjoy it.*

*Clubs focused on activities for blind and partially sighted children in primary.*

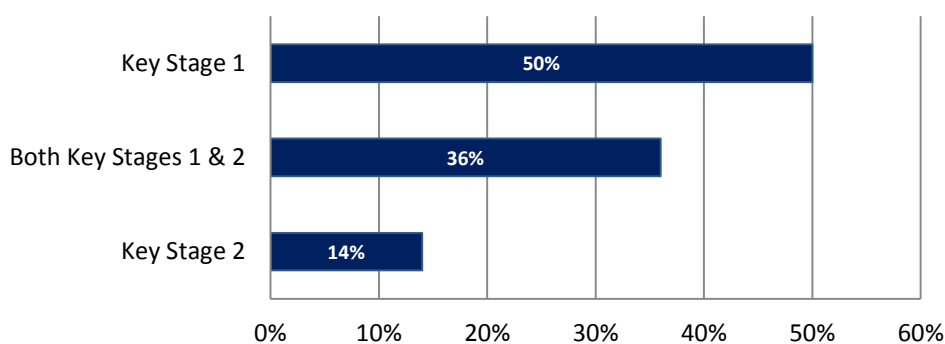
*To try and get children of all abilities involved in sports and to improve their skills.*

*Knowledge supported by info card. Help to differentiate and extend activities.*

*Opportunity for me to learn new skills to deliver differentiated activities during lunch time.*

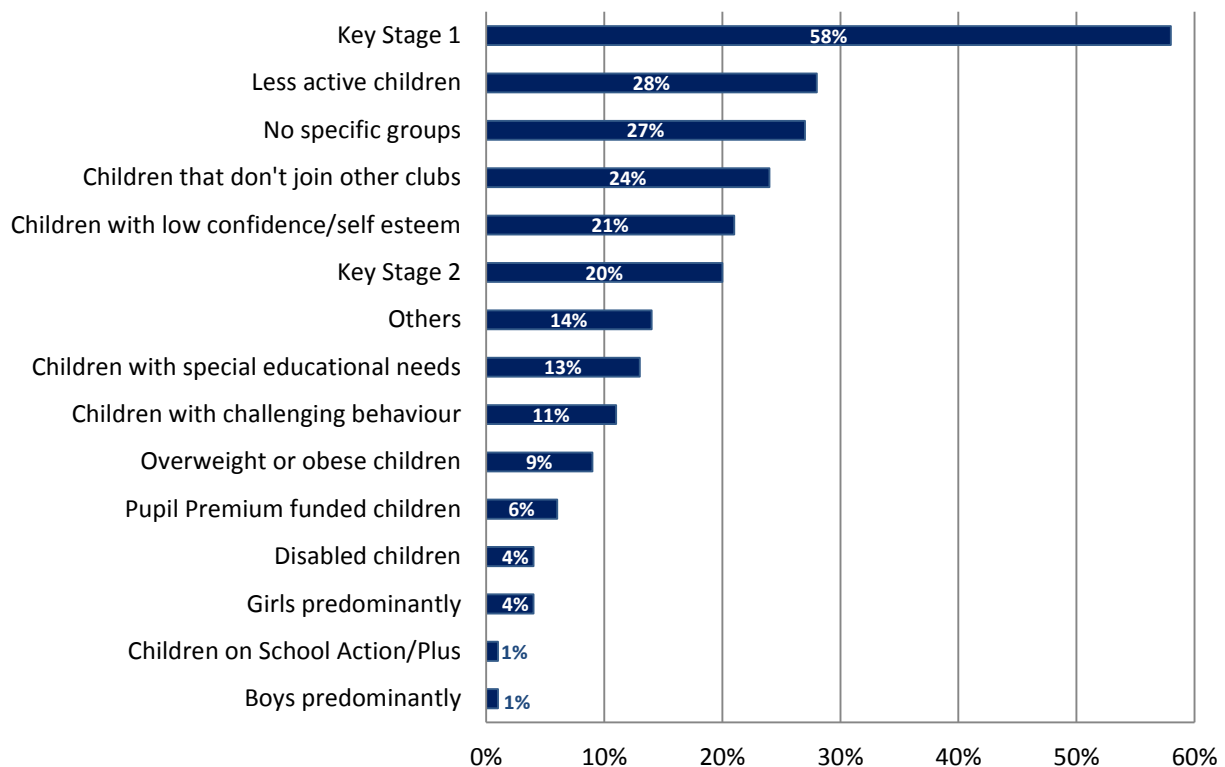
*I am based in a special school, so the reason we wanted to take on the skills2play is because we have lots of behaviour issues and wanted something that staff could do during break and lunch that would be productive for the pupils.*

Respondents to the Deliverer Survey highlighted and welcomed the uniqueness of Skills2Play in enabling schools to offer physical activity and physical literacy developmental opportunities to Key Stage 1 children, and this was also reported in telephone interviews with deliverers. Figure 2.13 shows that half of schools responding to the Deliverer Survey were running sessions solely with Key Stage 1 children, just over 10% with Key Stage 2 and almost 40% with both Key Stages.



**Figure 2.13) Schools delivering to KS1/KS2 (n=100)**

Figure 2.14 shows that over half of respondents to the Deliverer Survey specifically targeted the programme at Key Stage 1 children and over a quarter targeted less active children. Almost a quarter of respondents aimed their Skills2Play/Sport sessions at children who didn't join other clubs and a similar number at children with low levels of confidence.



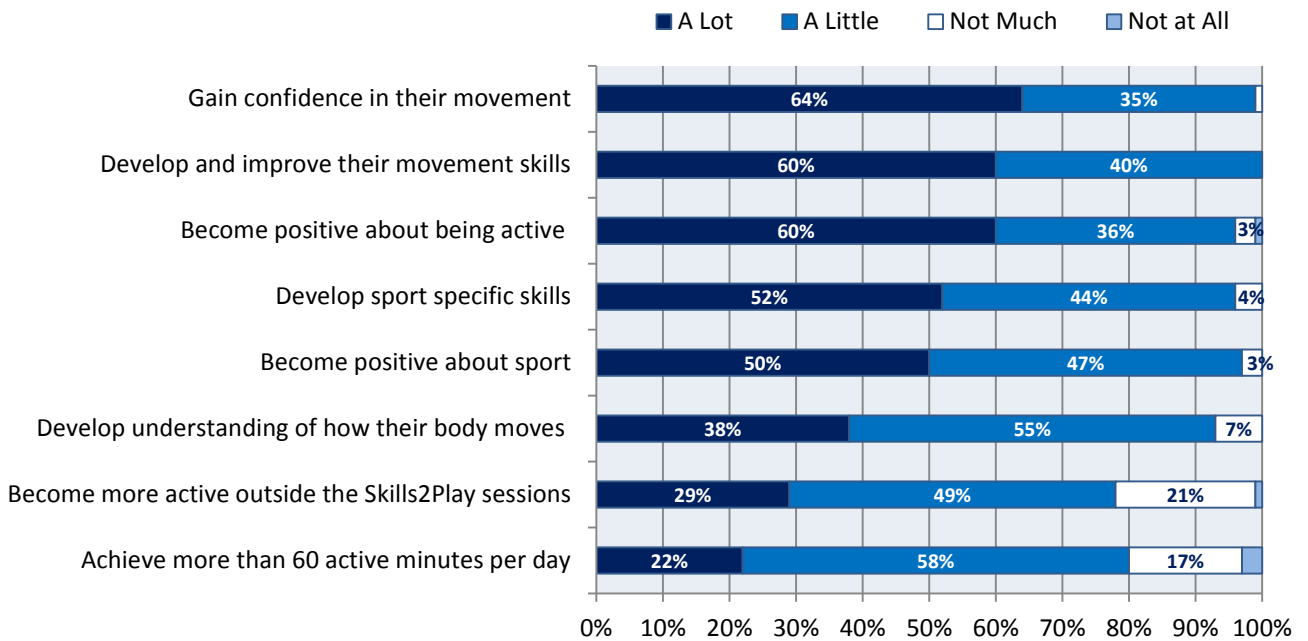
**Figure 2.14) Groups targeted for participation (n=79)**

Qualitative responses to the Deliverer Survey included reference to the inclusive nature of the programme; both in terms of its adaptability to children’s varying levels of competence and confidence, including those who ‘struggled with PE’, and in terms of the ease with which the programme could be delivered by those without prior knowledge of PE or school sports teaching, including young leaders. Similarly, during visits to schools delivering Skills2Play/Sport, deliverers highlighted the ability to cater for all pupils with the programme. Deliverers specifically stated their aims to encourage ‘disengaged children’, Key Stage 1 children who had fewer opportunities for involvement in activity and those lacking confidence.

## 2.7) Perceptions of impact

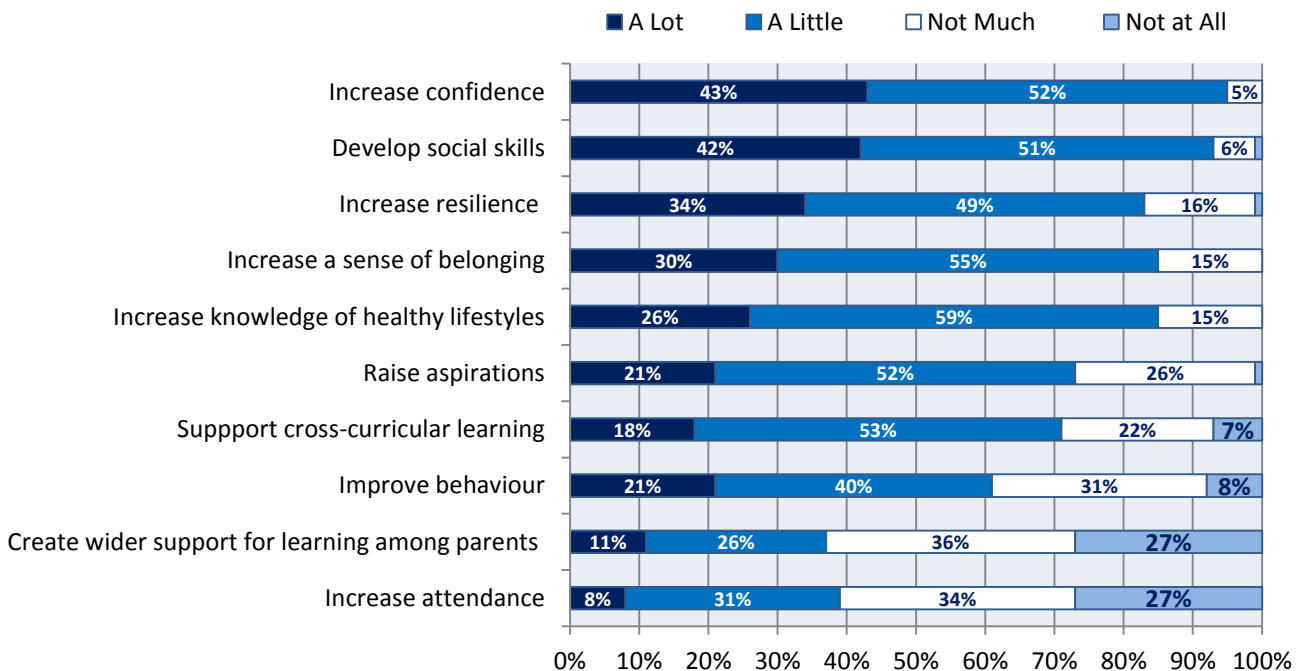
The Deliverer Survey asked deliverers about their perceptions of impact on participating children. Figure 2.15 shows responses in relation to the key outcome variables of children’s behaviour, confidence, motivation and understanding. All respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported an improvement in children’s movement skills and 99% reported that children had gained confidence in their movement. Nearly all respondents reported that participating children had become more positive about sport and being active, developed sport-specific skills and developed understanding of their bodies’ movement either ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’. Approximately 80% of respondents stated that children had become more active outside of Skills2Play/Sport sessions and a similar number reported that the programme had helped children to achieve 60 active minutes per day.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries’ Chief Medical Officers, 2011.



**Figure 2.15) Perceptions of impact on key outcome variables (n=75)**

In terms of deliverers' perceptions of wider impacts, nearly all respondents indicated that Skills2Play/Sport had helped increase children's confidence and develop social skills. Figure 2.16 shows that over 80% respondents reported that the programme had helped increase children's resilience and similar numbers reported an increased sense of belonging and knowledge of healthy lifestyles.



**Figure 2.16) Perceptions of impact of Skills2Play/Sport on children (n=75)**

However, whilst these data show that deliverers of Skills2Play/Sport are perceiving an impact on participating children, **responses to the Deliverer Survey and data from school visits indicate that children's progress in physical literacy is not being widely measured by schools.** Less than 4% of

respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported measuring their children’s progress in physical literacy. Of these, methods comprised recording personal best times in the Multi-Skills Festival activities; a Key Stage 1 survey about perception of themselves using smiley faces; and teacher assessment of improvement in basic skills (one respondent reported the inclusion of movement skills in lesson plans and teacher assessment of exceeding, expected or emerging graded against curriculum objectives). Researchers at visit schools observed that children’s progress was not being recorded consistently, if at all; whilst 2 visit school deliverers had used the suggestions on the Multi-Skills Festival activity cards to record ‘scores’ for the children at week 1, these related exclusively to quantity (not quality) of movement skills only (e.g. the number of throws on target, without reference to the quality of the throwing action) and this method had not been continued. No reference was made to the quality of the movement skills or to measuring levels of confidence, knowledge and understanding or motivation and attitudes.

Respondents were also asked to comment on the impact of the programme on their own competence and confidence to deliver sessions to develop children’s physical literacy. Deliverers highlighted the equipment and training provided by the Youth Sport Trust; these had provided deliverers with ideas, raising their confidence and ability to deliver the programme.

Respondents to the Deliverer Survey and deliverers at visit schools demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of physical literacy. Whilst some respondents stated that their PE experience/qualifications meant that Skills2Play/Sport had little or no impact on them (4%), the majority of responses indicated that deliverers welcomed the opportunity to gain new ideas and/or reassess their delivery of curriculum PE as shown in the illustrative comments in panel 2.7.

**Panel 2.7) Deliverers’ perception of impact on themselves (Deliverer Survey)**

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<i>The programme has really helped develop their understanding of the key components within physical literacy. It has developed their social skills and have enjoyed all of it.</i>	<i>It made me stop, think &amp; understand how to keep children engaged &amp; active in an effective &amp; fun way. Having the cards to refer to is a great help.</i>
<i>No change - I have a Sports Studies degree and years of coaching experience.</i>	<i>It has helped focus activities on the core fundamentals in developing physical literacy.</i>
<i>Mine? Not much, but it's been an excellent tool for the year 6 girl that has been delivering the club with me.</i>	<i>It has made little difference to me personally as I have a degree in PE and several years of experience as a PE AST.</i>
<i>I am able to identify that to be able to develop children's physical literacy they need to be given the suitable support for them personally. They also need to be aware themselves of their own abilities which can enable them to challenge themselves at their own pace.</i>	

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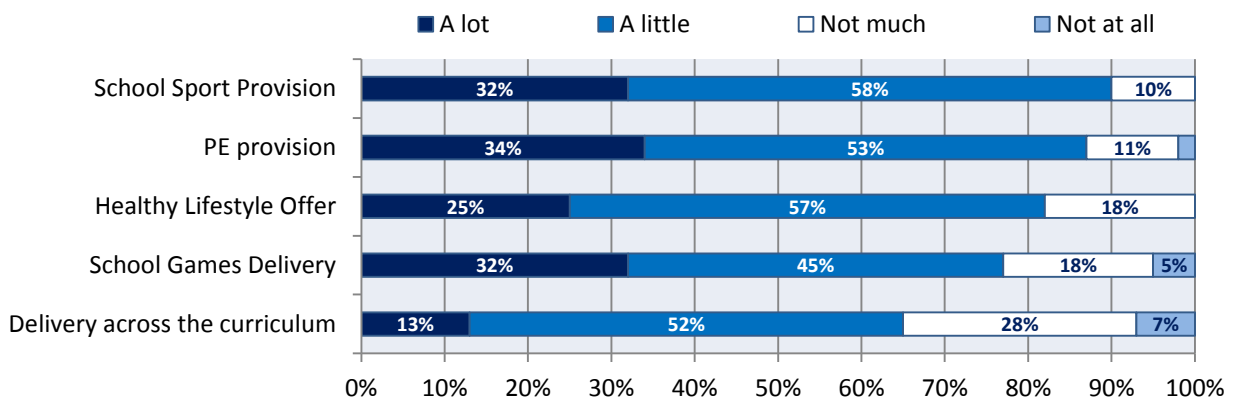
**2.8) Sustainability**

Evidence from the Deliverer Survey and visit schools suggests that teachers who attend Skills2Play/Sport training provided by the Youth Sport Trust are enlisting assistance from staff and pupils in their schools to deliver the programme (figures 2.3, 2.11 and panel 2.4). The sustainability

of the programme is likely to be enhanced by this in-school training and mentoring; both by reducing the reliance on a single deliverer and by helping to embed the programme within the school. For example, in the South West visit school, sessions were being undertaken in curriculum time with the whole class. The deliverer reported that she was able to adapt parts of the sessions to suit the varying needs of participants to provide developmental opportunities for all. She was hopeful that the programme would become embedded within curriculum PE as more staff received training to deliver the sessions.

## 2.9) Added value

Responses to the Deliverer Survey also suggest that Skills2Play/Sport has added value to other aspects of school life. ***In addition to adding to PE and school sport provision, over 80% of respondents to the Deliverer Survey reported that the programme had added to school's healthy lifestyle offer and 65% highlighted value added to delivery across the curriculum*** (figure 2.17). This 'fit' with schools' existing commitments and priorities; the perceived ability of the programme to deliver outcomes meeting schools' wider objectives, suggests potential longevity and sustainability.



**Figure 2.17) Aspects of school to which Skills2Play/Sport has added value (n=74)**

## 2.10) Key success factors and challenges

From SPEAR's observations of Skills2Play/Sport sessions in schools, along with interviews with lead deliverers and focus groups with children, a number of 'key success factors' (table 2.2) and challenges are apparent (table 2.3).

**Table 2.2) Success factors in visit schools**

- Using activity cards to offer activities inclusive to children of all ability levels.
- Encouraging children to engage with every aspect of the activity cards (STEPS, Literacy and Numeracy Links, etc).
- Offering Young Leaders the opportunity to organize and lead sessions.
- Mentoring Young Leaders by providing constructive feedback and regular learning opportunities.
- Encouraging a 'team-work' approach towards activities.
- Utilising all available resources, including knowledge and understanding of physical literacy gained from training.
- Giving children 'ownership' of the club by incorporating their thoughts and ideas into delivery.
- Supporting and mentoring other deliverers to increase capacity and make sessions more sustainable.
- Encouraging children to take on new challenges by offering different games and activities each week.
- Securing sufficient time and space to run the sessions.

**Table 2.3) Challenges to delivery in visit schools**

- Overcoming pre-conceived ideas of what physical activity/PE in schools 'should' be.
- Developing full understanding of physical literacy amongst deliverers.
- Lack of knowledge/guidance on measuring progress in physical literacy.
- Inability to secure sufficient time and space to run the sessions.



### 3) IMPACT OF SKILLS2PLAY

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#### HEADLINES

- *In all three KS1 visit schools, the physical literacy of participating children was observed to have developed over the 12 week period.*
  - *Observations of movement skills of KS1 participants showed improvements in stability, object control and locomotion; these improvements were most noticeable in the youngest children (Year 1) and those initially demonstrating lower levels of physical literacy.*
  - *Over the 12 week period in all KS1 visit schools, improvements were observed and reported (by both participants and deliverers) in children's confidence, social skills, creativity and resilience.*
- 

This section explores the impact of Skills2Play on participating Key Stage 1 children. Three schools were visited at two timepoints – weeks 1 and 12 of their Skills2Play sessions. For each school, three outcome indicators of physical literacy – Stability, Object Control and Locomotion – were observed and analysed at both timepoints to assess impact on participating children's physical literacy development. Qualitative data from the deliverer interview and children's focus group at each school complements the observational data.

#### 3.1) Visits overview

In two of the three visit schools, deliverers stated their aim to measure the children's physical literacy by running Skills2Play/Sport Multi-Skills Festival at weeks 1 and 12, scoring children on the basis of the suggestions on the activity cards and comparing these scores to measure progress.

It is note-worthy, however, that by the week 12 sessions in both schools, the deliverer had decided not to score the children. Researchers noted the importance of the 'fun' element of the programme in the schools visited and the case studies highlight the holistic nature of the sessions and their outcomes. By week 12, deliverers did not consider scoring appropriate and cited their intentions to make more holistic observations of the children in order to assess their physical literacy.

***In all three visit schools, the physical literacy of participating children was observed to have developed over the 12 week period. Observations of movement skills showed improvements in stability, object control and locomotion skills; these improvements were most noticeable in the youngest children (Year 1) and those initially demonstrating lower levels of physical literacy, but were observed to varying degrees in all participants and in some instances even within the space of the first session.***

As noted in section 2, deliverers in visit schools highlighted the adaptability of the Skills2Play/Sport programme to cater for the varying levels of physical literacy of participating children in any one group. Whilst two of the three schools were running Skills2Play sessions as an after school club, none of the visit schools had specifically targeted their sessions, and in the South West school the sessions were being undertaken in curriculum time with the whole class. In the latter school, the

deliverer reported that she was able to adapt parts of the sessions to suit the varying needs of participants in order to provide developmental opportunities for all.

***Over the 12 week period in all KS1 visit schools, improvements were observed and reported (by both participants and deliverers) in children's confidence, social skills, creativity and resilience.***

The case studies in appendix D highlight examples of these developments; of particular note is the advances made by children in the South West school who had previously 'struggled with PE', the increased enthusiasm, confidence and articulation of the children at the South East school and the teamwork and leadership skills developed in the North West school. In addition to demonstrating these developmental aspects, comments made by participating children and included in the observation sections below speak clearly to their enjoyment of Skills2Play sessions.

### **Panel 3.1) Comments from Skills2Play participants (KS1 Visit Schools)**

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*If they didn't know what to do I would help them, we would ask what they are doing and help them.*

*It is good because there are lots of skills; they are the skills that we might use in sports too.*

*When we did aiming, I normally just kick it anywhere but I know how to aim now.*

*I really like the club because I like the sports leaders – they are the best!*

*Grace was stuck on the one when we made up jumps together...I showed her how to do the different jump and at the end we did the jump together.*

*I kept getting stuck on the star jump but Jay kept showing me and showing me – he wasn't hitting his knees so I showed him how to do the shape – and I did it at the end.*

*I like that I can do things with my friends and work together with others too.*

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The next sections provide observations from three visit schools delivering Skills2Play to Key Stage 1 children. Each section includes observations of participants' stability, object control and locomotion skills and assessment of impact of the programme on children's physical literacy.

### **3.2) Overview of schools**

#### **Broadfield Primary School, Manchester**

Skills2Play was run as an after school club in the sports hall with 20 pupils, half from Year 1 and half from Year 2. The lead deliverer, Ben, was teacher with responsibility for PE sessions and sports clubs and he was assisted by young leaders. The activity card used in the first session was the 'Multi-Skills Festival' which the deliverer hoped to use in order to 'get a baseline', with young leaders guiding participants at each station and 'scoring' them with the use of an iPad.

#### **Hernhill Primary School, Hernebay**

The sessions ran once a week as an after school club and were initially led by the SGO, Sarah. In total 24 children participated, 12 from Year 1 and 12 from Year 2. Young leaders from Year 6 and one from the school sport partnership (James) initially assisted with (and later led) the sessions. At the first sessions, they were tasked with 'scoring' the children in line with the multi-skill festival recommendations on the Skills2Play activity cards, in order to provide baseline data for participants.

#### **Torpoint Nursery & Infant School, Torpoint**

The Skills2Play sessions ran once a week in curriculum time in the school sports hall. The lead deliverer was a teacher, Dani, who was assisted by the class teaching assistant. Dani explained that the Skills2Play session would include the entire class, with parts of the sessions adapted to meet the individual needs of the children and to ensure each child has the opportunity to progress.

### **3.3) Outcome indicators**

This section groups observations under the key outcome indicators of Locomotion, Object Control and Stability. It is recognised that some activities undertaken during these sessions involve a number of skills; the observations included in this section are grouped for clarity and brevity. As activities varied between weeks 1 and 12, it was not possible to report direct impact on specific skills in all cases; however, observations at weeks 1 and 12 provide insight into the impact of the programme on these children and full observations for each school are provided in Appendix D.

#### **3.31 Locomotion**

At Broadfield Primary School the 'Slalom Run' provided an opportunity to observe the children's locomotion skills at week 1. Scores were recorded for how many times each child ran through the slalom course in thirty seconds. The majority of the children were not swinging their arms while running, keeping their arms either rigid to their side or hanging loosely in the air. A few of the older children demonstrated a slightly more advanced running motion, however nearly all of the children kept their eyes focused on either their feet, the cones or the floor, with only one or two keeping their heads up and eyes forward. All of the children ran with their body visibly upright, taking multiple steps to change direction rather than shifting body weight.

At week 12 the Warm-up offered an opportunity to observe locomotion skills. Similarly to the first visit, all children kept their eyes focused on their feet; however there was a slight improvement in terms of the fluidity of the running motion, as just under half of the children demonstrated 'softer' steps accompanied by arms swinging in a smooth, consistent manner. The rest of the group appeared fairly rigid overall displaying erratic steps, with the body upright.

At Hernhill Primary School the 'Speed Bounce' appeared to be one of the most difficult activities for all children at week 1. The older Year 2 children were generally more successful than the Year 1 children. Nonetheless, all children struggled to jump effectively and efficiently at speed with a number of children falling over and some not being able to maintain the intensity for the full 30 seconds. Most children did not swing their arms and were relatively rigid and heavy when landing. Those children who were less successful focused their eyes on their feet. Based on the multi-skills festival card suggestion that each child should jump from side to side as many times as possible in 30 seconds, the lead deliverer and the young leaders counted the number of jumps completed in 30 seconds and recorded the information as scores.

At week 12 the Warm-up was used to energise the children as well as allowing the children to move in different directions, at different speeds and ensuring the children were spatially aware. The children had to walk, jog and run around the hall until the instruction 'stop!' was given. The children were much more confident. This was particularly evident by the energy and effort they put into the warm-up, the group as a whole were much more vocal and interacted well together, with the young leaders and with James. Whilst jogging and running the children were able to use their arms more effectively in comparison to the week 1 'Slalom Run' activity that was observed. The children were able to hold their heads up and look around them ensuring they were much more spatially aware. Overall the locomotive movements observed during the warm-up were more fluid and natural, allowing the children to enjoy the activity more and focus on where to move to next as opposed to how to move. The greatest improvements and developments were observed in the Year 1 children.

At Torpoint Nursery and Infant School the week 1 'Step it Out' session focused largely on 'running' activities. Early on it was clear that a group of 4 children were behind the other children in terms of their locomotive skills, as they were grouped together to allow the teaching assistant to give them some extra attention. At the beginning of the session, almost every child ran with their eyes focused on either the ground or their feet, resulting in a large number of children bumping into one another during the first activity. The large majority of the children in the class were also running with 'heavy feet'; their steps would cause a loud slapping sound as their feet hit the ground with force. Dani recognised both of these issues very quickly, encouraging the children to keep their eyes focused on the direction they are running, and also highlighted how loud their steps were, prompting some children to move more gracefully. As the session went on, around 6 children were noticeably running more 'smoothly', although the majority of the children still appeared to be running 'heavy footed'. After the early part of the session where children were bumping into each other regularly, the majority of the children were keeping their eyes focused forward in the direction they were running, however 4 of the children were still focused on their feet throughout the entire session.

At week 12 the focus of the session was different jumping techniques; however the warm-up activity provided an opportunity to observe certain aspects of the children's locomotive skills. During the first visit a notable improvement occurred by the end of the session, and these improved skills remained evident twelve weeks later. Every child demonstrated a fairly 'smooth' running motion; even the four children who struggled in the last session were clearly swinging their arms in sync with their legs. Early on there were still a lot of 'heavy feet' but Dani pointed this out less than a minute into the warm-up resulting in noticeably 'softer steps' throughout the session. Despite clear improvement overall, around 6 children still kept their eyes focused on their feet leading to a number of collisions during the warm-up activity.

### **3.32 Object Control**

At Broadfield Primary School in week 1 around 7 of the 20 children were observed at the 'Throw-Clap-Catch' station to be slightly more advanced than their peers, with the ball releasing above their head, then going straight up and coming straight down into their hands. For the rest of the children the ball would often not be caught successfully. The majority of the children would release the ball from around waist height when throwing, causing the ball to finish about a foot away from where they were standing. Of those that did catch the ball there appeared to be no 'give' in their arms when catching the ball to absorb the force of the ball, instead slapping their hands at the ball in an uneven motion. Once again, scores were recorded for how many times each child was able to 'Throw-Clap-Catch' in thirty seconds.

At week 12 the children were asked to kick the ball back and forth with a partner, which proved to be a difficult activity for a large proportion of the group. Only 3 pairs were able to pass and receive the ball in a controlled manner, using the inside of the foot to receive the ball while the remaining children used their toes for both the pass and the reception, resulting in a lot of errant passes and heavy touches. None of the children raised their arms in an attempt to stabilise themselves as they kicked the ball, leading to the majority of children stumbling to one side or the other.

At Hernhill Primary School in week 1 the 'Throw-Catch-Clap' exercise really differentiated between those children who were more advanced than others. The majority of children threw the ball too high and were unable to clap and then catch. The position of their arms and hands in preparation to catch the ball was relatively wide and in an unfavourable position to catch the ball successfully. The ball's trajectory was not linear or vertical in nature but more up and out away from their bodies. The children generally did not move from the spot they were stood in to try and catch the ball that had gone awry. A few missed the point of the exercise and threw the ball high to get as many claps into the activity before catching the ball. Again the children's scores were recorded, based on the number of throw up-clap-catches the children could complete in 30 seconds, as outlined by the multi-skill festival activity card recommendations. At the 'Target' station the children were instructed to throw bean bags into a hoop placed at a set distance on the floor. Most children struggled with the throwing action and some elected to throw under arm. The body positioning of each child was generally very rigid and lacked rotation at the trunk and shoulders. In addition the base of their feet were either too close together or shoulder width apart and there was no weight transfer between the legs as they threw the bean bag (possibly due to the lack of trunk and shoulder rotation and the position of their feet). The maximum score observed within 30 seconds was 6. The Year 2 children performed slightly better in comparison to the younger children in Year 1. Children's scores were recorded based on the number of bean bags the children could throw into a hoop on the floor 2 metres away from their starting position within 30 seconds. This was an adaptation of the multi-skills festival card which suggested that each child has 5 bean bags and 5 opportunities to throw the bean bag into the hoop.

At week 12 James explained that the 'Throw-Catch-Clap' station had been adapted to cater for the children's progression in this skill, with the balls replaced with fabric squares to increase the skill level required. In contrast to the observations in week 1 the children were more confident in throwing the coloured fabric squares and whilst watching the squares they were able to move their feet, arms and hands more effectively allowing them to catch the fabric squares. All children from Year 1 and 2 demonstrated the ability to adjust their feet and arms to allow them to successfully catch the fabric squares once they had thrown the fabric into the air. The children were confident in watching the trajectory of the fabric squares, which enabled them to move their

feet, arms and hands to successfully catch the fabric. Those children who occasionally missed the fabric square were confident enough to try again and were able to adjust their movements accordingly to catch the coloured fabric square. Overall there were marked improvements observed within the 'Throw-Catch-Clap' skill. The 'Target' Station had also been adapted from week 1 in which children threw beanbags into a hoop to throwing a tennis ball at three cricket stumps. The children had the opportunity to stand on 2 coloured spots one closer to the cricket stumps than the other and attempt to hit one of the three stumps with their throw. The cricket stumps had provided the children with a much smaller target than the original hula hoop utilised in week 1. All children stood with one foot forward, shoulders slightly turned with the tennis ball in their hand furthest away from the target and the leading arm facing towards the target. The children were all able to rotate their hips, bringing their arm through and releasing the ball in the direction of the target cricket stumps. The more confident children had a more fluid movement and motion in comparison to the less confident children. However all children were able to adjust their positions and were willing to try again if they were not successful. The less confident children initially opted to stand on the coloured spot closest to the cricket stumps. All children experienced a level of success and were prepared to continue to try if they missed the target; some children who initially chose to stand closer to the target took a step back to throw the ball towards the target from the furthest point after experiencing success.

Due to the nature of the activities involved in weeks 1 and 12 sessions at Torpoint Nursery and Infant School unfortunately no aspects of object control could be observed.

### **3.33 Stability**

At Broadfield Primary School at the 'Static Balance' station during week 1, the children tried to balance on one leg as the young leaders recorded the length of time each child successfully balanced for. None of the younger children were able to balance for more than 5 to 10 seconds, while a few of the older children could balance for over 20 seconds. The majority of the children appeared to intuitively put their arms out to the side for the balance, however only a few of the children kept their head forward, as most of the children focused on either their supporting leg or outstretched arms. The widest range of skill level was observed at the 'Speed Bounce' station (stability and locomotion). A few of the older children demonstrated excellent jumping form, bouncing softly side to side extending their knees and back on the jump and bending their knees upon landing. Some of the younger children really struggled on this station, jumping with rigid arms and legs as one leg would leave the floor while the other was still on the floor, almost stepping over the line. There was a lot of variety between children as some were able to execute the jump successfully but struggled with the landing. The young leaders noted down how many jumps from side to side each child completed in thirty seconds. The difference between the Year 1 and Year 2 children was most noticeable on this station.

At week 12, there were no specific 'stability' activities to observe. However, observations all 3 key outcome indicators are provided below.

For Hernhill Primary School, while no specific 'stability' activities were undertaken, aspects of stability observed are provided in the 'locomotion' and 'object control' sections and the combined 'locomotion, object control and stability' section provides observations of activities in which all three skills were utilised.

At Torpoint Nursery and Infant School, although locomotion was the main focus of the week 1 session, some aspects of stability could be observed throughout the activities. When the children were asked to change direction the majority of children would 'steady their hands' with arms outstretched to maintain balance. Around 7 children consistently stumbled when changing direction at speed and looked extremely uncomfortable doing so.

At week 12 the session began with children completing a frog jump. The large majority of children made a concerted effort to simultaneously pull their knees close to their chest; however 2 of the children were unable to pull both legs up in sync. This technique was fairly easy for most of the group and even the 4 children who struggled in the previous session were able to complete this jumping motion smoothly. Moving onto 'Jumping Jacks', only 3 children landed softly with their knees bending upon impact. Dani quickly used 1 of these children to demonstrate the correct form and following this all the children except 2 were bending their knees on impact to land softly. Four of the children did not use their arms to stabilise their landing and as a result often stumbled forward. After further demonstrations the remaining 4 children began to use their arms in an attempt to stabilise themselves after landing. The next activity was slightly more difficult, and involved the children completing a tuck jump. At first only half of the children were able to correctly pull their knees to their chest while still landing softly with their knees bending on impact. After a few attempts, all the children except 6 were successfully tucking their knees into their chest and bending their knees upon impact. The remaining 6 struggled to lift their knees simultaneously, with one knee tucking before the other, often resulting in the child landing off balance and stumbling forward. Four of the more advanced children were then asked to perform the tuck jump off a box onto a mat while the remaining children continued to practice the tuck jump. Eventually all except 1 child were landing softly and tucking both knees simultaneously. The group was then split into pairs. The pairs were asked to complete every jump they had learnt in a single sequence, with the 2 more advanced pairs doing the same activity off the boxes. Most of the children were trying to help their partner with the jumps by observing their partners and telling them what they needed to do differently. This was largely unprompted, however the club lead gradually encouraged the children to help their pairs and as a result the helping behavior became even more evident. By the end of this activity every child except 1 was completing the jumps with excellent form and landing softly with their knees bending upon impact. The children who struggled earlier in the session began to jump a little bit lower and as a result had much better form on the takeoff and landing. Finally, the children were asked to use their 'creative me' skills to add a brand new jump/shape to the sequence. Two pairs incorporated a clap into the star jump motion while a group of 3, who were the same children that struggled throughout, successfully completed a synchronised star jump, with 1 child counting them in.

### ***3.34 Stability, Object Control and Locomotion (combined)***

At Broadfield Primary School the 'Bat and Ball Relay' station focused on a combination of skills at week 1. The majority of the children walked extremely slowly and attempted to adjust their body position to keep the ball on the centre of the racket rather than adjust the racket position. The children's scores were recorded for how many times they were able to make it around the cones without dropping the ball, in thirty seconds. Most of the children experienced little success on this task, which proved to be more interesting after watching them complete the balance beam with relative ease. Only around a third of the children demonstrated a natural walking motion while balancing the bean bag on their head, however most of the children successfully walked to the end of the line without the bean bag falling off their head.

At week 12, each child was provided with a football and asked to dribble the ball around the hall, keeping it under control with the inside of their foot. Many of the children appeared unsure how to approach this activity and required further demonstration from Ben and the young leaders. Much like the warm-up activity, the children were very upright while moving around the hall, however after a prompt from Ben the majority of children began to crouch over the ball slightly in an attempt to keep the ball under control. On the whole, only around 4 or 5 of the older children were able to keep tight control over the ball, while the rest of the children struggled to take more than 3 or 4 steps without the ball rolling away from them. Following the initial activities, Ben introduced an adaptation of the classic 'Space Invaders' game in which a variety of coloured cones (each colour possessing different values) were placed around the hall. Children were grouped into 6 teams, taking turns to kick a ball towards a coloured cone. Over half of the children used the inside of their foot to perform a controlled kick aimed at the target - a noticeable improvement from earlier for many children. Considering that such a small number of children were able to complete a controlled pass in an earlier activity, the number of children using the inside of their foot to make a controlled pass towards a target was notable. Some children still used the top of their toes, causing a lot of balls to fly uncontrollably in the wrong direction. Ben then altered the game by asking the children to throw, rather than kick the ball at the coloured cones. Ben did not specify what type of throw to use and at first every child adopted an overarm throw. There appeared to be little improvement on form of the overarm throws, with children still not rotating their bodies or executing a follow through motion. As the activity went on 6 or 7 children began to roll the ball at the cones, which was clearly the most effective method. It was notable to see some of the younger children recognise that their technique was not the most effective, attempting to imitate the children who were having more success.

In Hernhill Primary School at week 1 during the 'Bat and Ball Relay' the majority of the children walked extremely slowly and attempted to adjust their body position to keep the ball on the centre of the racket rather than adjust the racket position. This was a combination skill that all children found very difficult with most children experiencing little success. The children's scores were recorded for how many times they were able to make it around the cones without dropping the ball in thirty seconds; again this was based upon the multi-skills festival activity card provided within the Skills2Play resource pack. The children were asked to balance and walk across a bench as many times as possible within 30 seconds with a bean bag on their heads. Some children intuitively put their arms out to balance, maintained a stable posture with their head up and eyes forward and did not drop the bean bag from their heads. However, the majority of the children were looking down, unsteady on their feet and not always using their arms to balance. The children's scores were recorded and linked to the number of times the bean bag fell off their heads and the number of times they could balance along the beam for. This activity had been adapted from the multi-skills festival activity cards.

At week 12 the most significant developments were observed at the 'Bat and Ball Relay' activity station. Previously all children struggled to move from one cone to another balancing a tennis ball on a plastic tennis racket. The week 12 observations demonstrated substantial developments in the children's ability to move quickly and freely between cones whilst adjusting the racket and keeping the ball balanced throughout the activity or for a longer time period/greater distance moved. The children were able to refine their body position and movements accounting for the movements of the tennis ball and preventing the ball from falling off the racket. If the ball did fall from the racket the children were able to try again and adjust their bodies accordingly. On the whole the children kept their eyes looking forward and were even able to progress the skill to either walking, jogging, running and bouncing the ball on the racket or to using a table tennis bat



and ball. The children were much more confident; in particular the Year 1 children were able to exhibit a higher level of skill during this activity than observed at week 1. The 'Balance Beam' activity had also been adapted from week 1 to allow for the development of children's ability to balance on the move whilst keeping a beanbag on their head. The bench that had been used in week 1 as the balance beam had been turned upside down to use the bottom of the bench, which has a much narrower surface area during week 12. Every child was confident enough to try the activity and both Year 1 and Year 2 were able to successfully balance and walk across the beam. Generally the children were able to keep their heads up and eyes looking forward, most children used their arms to adjust their position to maintain their balance. Some children were able to move much more quickly across the beam than others but all completed the activity and experienced more success in more difficult conditions than week 1.

In Torpoint Nursery and Infant School, the focus of the sessions at both weeks 1 and 12 was locomotion and stability, observations for which are provided in the respective sections.

### **3.4) Further impact observations**

In Broadfield Primary School the deliverer, Ben, had hoped that Skills2Play sessions would have a positive impact on the children's fundamental movement skills. After 12 weeks of running the club Ben commented that whilst individuals had progressed and all had enjoyed the sessions, he did not believe that the group as a whole had progressed in their fundamental movement skills.

However, there was a visible improvement among some of the younger children who were clearly much more in control of their movements and body as a whole. Upon the first visit there was a large gap between the younger and older children; by week 12, this had narrowed as the younger children's skills had begun to catch up with those of the older children.

Ben explained that an inconsistent turnout from club members has somewhat halted noticeable progression from the group as a whole. While the club had a number of regular members, many of those who turned up to the first session have only attended three or four sessions. Ben cited parental involvement as a possible factor for children not attending regularly: *"Overall the parents have been great, but there are a few of the kids who I don't think have been encouraged by their parents as much as they should have"*. With the sessions running as an after school club some parents are hesitant for their children to attend due to other commitments and time constraints. Ben was confident that a number of issues surrounding children's regular engagement could be solved by implementing the club within curriculum PE lessons; allowing a greater range of children an opportunity to try the activities.

Although there has been somewhat limited progression from a fundamental movement skills standpoint, one of the most noticeable impacts of the club has been upon a large group of children who had previously not been a member of any clubs. The opportunity provided by Skills2Play had increased their confidence and aspirations:

*A lot of them came in very timid and unsure of themselves. Now they are taking up extra clubs, and some have joined the football team. That is one of the biggest things that has come from Skill2Play – that confidence to go forward, put yourself out there and start learning new skills.*

(Ben, teacher deliverer)

Ben still believes that, with time, the skills the children learn in these sessions will benefit the children's movement development in the future:

*You are giving them the basics like balance, coordination, locomotion and you're moving in different directions and you're even getting the ball skills going. It links in everywhere and that's why I want them to do it, because once you've got a foundation level there where they have all the basics then over time you can progress.*

(Ben, teacher deliverer)

Ben is pleased overall with the strides the club has made, and despite some of the issues faced, Ben believes the clubs success can really be highlighted by some children's individual progression:

*There's a kid that was encouraged to join half way because he struggled with his motor skills, and so we use that as a focus for him, what can we do to improve his fundamental skills? I mean he might not have come on leaps and bounds but you can tell from the start where he couldn't catch a ball to now after coming along to about six sessions he can bounce a ball, catch it and move with it.*

(Ben, teacher deliverer)

By week 12 the children appeared more confident and open to discuss their experiences, demonstrating newfound understanding and ability to articulate what they do and how they move.

In Hernhill Primary School the deliverer, James indicated that he had seen significant improvements in participants' movement skills, social skills and confidence:

*Sarah, the young leaders and I have really observed massive developments across the board in all year 1 and 2 children. The developments haven't just been from a physical development perspective but we have seen the children grow in confidence too. You can see the children are all playing together, able to help each other and shouting more so and much more talkative, as you can see a bit too much at times! I would definitely say this is a really good programme and the children have all benefited, in particular I think you can see the year 1 children have had the best all round development in terms of physical competencies and movement.*

(James, SSP young leader deliverer)

By week 12, the children were much more confident and willing to engage and respond to questions in the focus group. In addition they were more able to articulate what they enjoyed and why in relation to Skills2play. All of the children wanted to contribute and provide feedback to questions in contrast to week 1 when the Year 1 children in particular were very shy and quiet.

In Torpoint Nursery and Infant School the 4 children who had really struggled during the first visit were noticeably more confident and also had caught up with the other children physically. One of the 4 had improved so much that he was no longer grouped with the other 3. The others engaged with each other throughout the session and showed tremendous progression towards the end of the session, with 2 of the 3 being able to successfully complete every jump that they had learnt with the correct form.

At the end of the week 12 session all of the pairs were asked to demonstrate their sequences to the rest of the class, while using their 'social me' to give some constructive feedback. All of the groups communicated well to choreograph their sequences and provided some useful feedback to their peers when asked. Some of the less confident pairs happily provided feedback to their peers.

Using a different card every week, Dani noted that the children's fundamental movement skills have progressed in each session:

*I think you see improvement in their movement skills in each session, as we work on a new skill each week. They all do kind of link to a final progression, and I think they have progressed over time. They do make progress within that one session but over time there is a definite gradual change in all the skills.*

(Dani, teacher deliverer)

In addition, Dani commented on the impact of the programme on children's confidence and communication, teamwork and creative skills:

*There definitely has been a big impact in all the different areas, not just the physical side; there have been a number of wider impacts too. It has impacted their creative skills, as well as their speaking and listening skills - because there is a lot of team work and evaluation that they have been doing...I think every child's confidence has grown, their teamwork has benefited and that is going to benefit them in everything they do. Thinking of one child in my class, the skills have really supported him in his general day-to-day activities, he needs extra support with his co-ordination skills and it really has supported him. The STEP part of the card has really enabled me to ensure I am meeting his needs as well as everyone else's.*

(Dani, teacher deliverer)

The children had demonstrated considerable enthusiasm at week 1 and continued to do so at week 12, engaging with both their peers and the club lead. The children were very confident and enthusiastic during the first visit; however by the time of the second visit at week 12 the children appeared even more comfortable talking about the sessions, communicating much more freely. The children were very keen to demonstrate how they had helped each other during the session. A number of children appeared to be much more comfortable discussing their strengths and weaknesses, some were even happy to talk about how other children had helped them. At the time of the first visit the children were still quite hesitant to try new games, however twelve weeks later the children were very enthusiastic about trying new games and even appeared very excited at the suggestion of playing new games, demonstrating increased confidence and aspirations. Much like the first visit, the children demonstrated a good understanding of why being physically active is important.

These sections provided observations from three schools visited to assess the impact of the programme on Key Stage 1 participants. The next section will examine the impact of the programme on Key Stage 2 children by analysis of Children's Survey data, supported by qualitative data collected during three visits to schools delivering to Key Stage 2.

## 4) IMPACT OF SKILLS2PLAYSPORT

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### HEADLINES

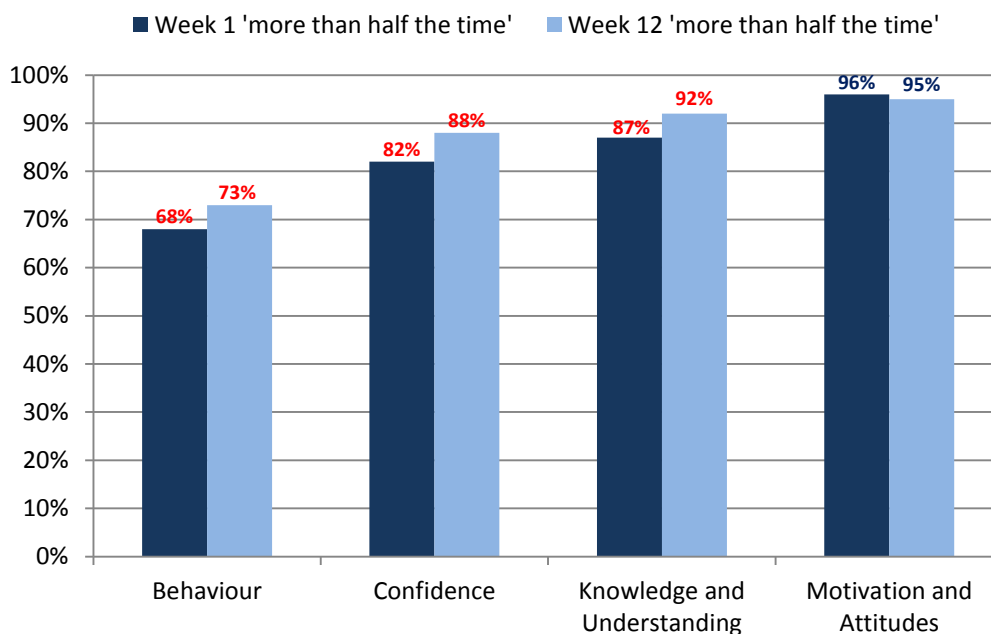
- *Data from the Children's Survey show a statistically significant increase between weeks 1 and 12 in the number of KS2 children undertaking at least 60 minutes of physical activity.*
  - *Children's Survey data show statistically significant increases between weeks 1 and 12 in the behaviour, confidence, knowledge and understanding of KS2 participants.*
  - *KS2 Children's Survey data show that levels of motivation were high and attitudes were positive at week 1 and remained so at week 12.*
- 

The Children's Survey captured data relating to key aspects of physical literacy: *behaviour; motivation and attitudes; confidence; knowledge and understanding*. This section of the report presents cross-sectional analysis (n=584) of data and highlights where statistically significant changes have occurred over 12 weeks of the programme (at  $p < .05$ ). In the figures presented, statistically significant changes are highlighted in red. Where repeated-measures analysis (n=175) identified statistically significant differences, this is also reported. Continuing evaluation through 2015/16 will increase the sample size which will facilitate detection of smaller changes. Qualitative data captured during school visits provides further insight into the impact of the programme on Key Stage 2 children and holistic outcomes are reported at the end of this section.

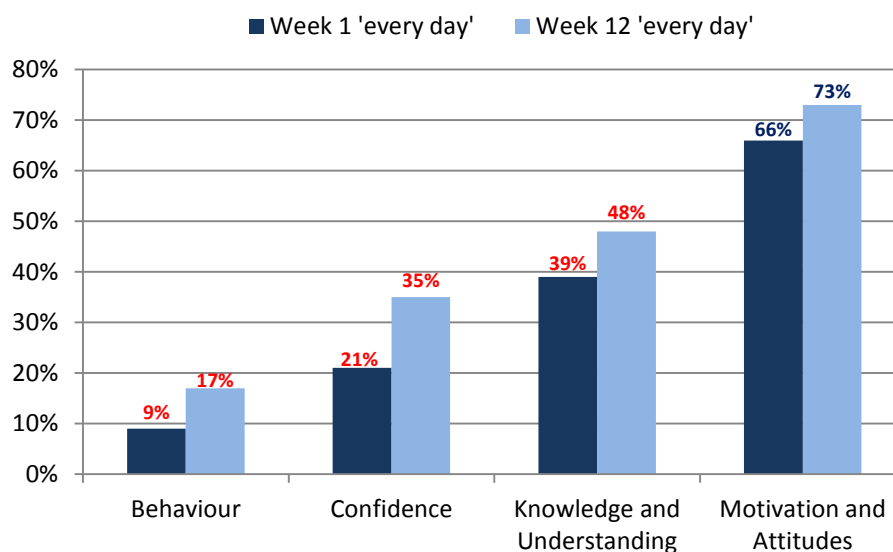
#### 4.1) Overview

Data from the Children's Survey indicates that 9/10 participants in Skills2PlaySport are in Key Stage 2, with approximately 1 in 10 being younger. Just over half of participants are boys (55%) and just under half are girls (45%).

The Children's Survey examines the impact of the programme on the behaviour, confidence, knowledge and understanding, and motivation and attitudes of participants by asking a series of questions aligned to these constructs. Whilst the constructs are utilised for analysis, the survey questions are grouped under the headings of 'Physical Me', 'Social Me', 'Thinking Me' and 'Healthy Me' in order to increase accessibility and comprehension for this age group and to link with these themes of the programme. The physical literacy outcomes are also closely aligned with the Youth Sport's Trust CARE model, which emphasises creativity, aspirations, resilience and empathy, and impact on these aspects is reported in the sections below. The response scale for all questions is 'every day', 'most days', 'some days', 'never' and a breakdown of all responses is provided in appendix B. Figures presented in this section illustrate the changes in the percentages of children that did, felt or liked each aspect 'more than half the time' (i.e. 'every day' or 'most days') and 'every day'. Analysis in this section provides an overview of impact on all aspects of physical literacy, followed by assessment of impact for each aspect. ***Children's Survey data show statistically significant increases between weeks 1 and 12 in the behaviour, confidence, knowledge and understanding of KS2 participants.*** Figure 4.1 represents responses 'more than half the time' relating to all aspects of physical literacy at weeks 1 and 12; figure 4.2 shows the change in 'every day' responses.



**Figure 4.1) Behaviour, Confidence, Knowledge & Motivation 'more than half the time' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**



**Figure 4.2) Behaviour, Confidence, Knowledge & Motivation 'every day' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

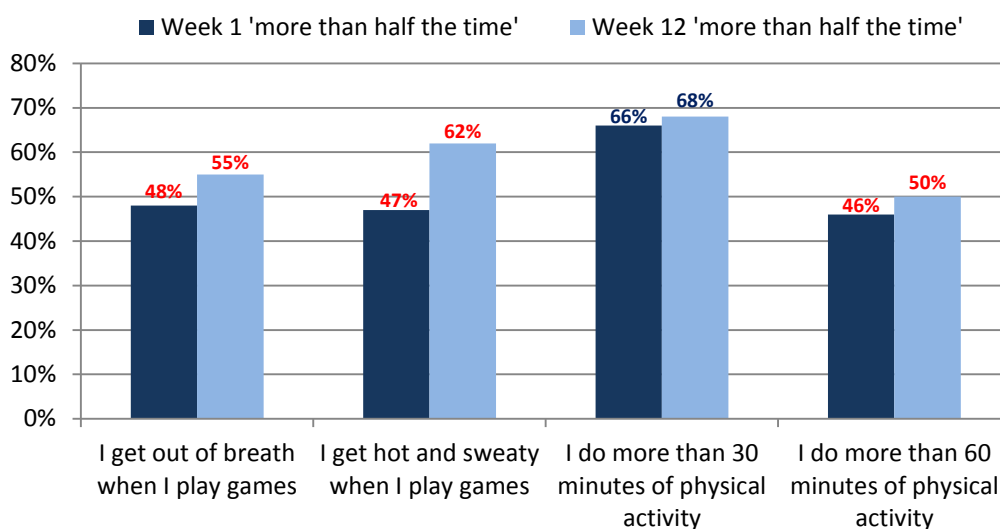
#### 4.2) Behaviour

The behaviour aspect of physical literacy is measured by frequency and intensity of physical activity undertaken and relate mainly to the 'Physical Me' theme. **Data from the Children's Survey show a statistically significant increase between weeks 1 and 12 in the number of KS2 children undertaking at least 60 minutes of physical activity<sup>7</sup>.** This represents a significant increase in the proportion of children undertaking physical activity in line with the CMO recommendations<sup>8</sup>. In addition, data show statistically significant increases in the proportion of children that get out of

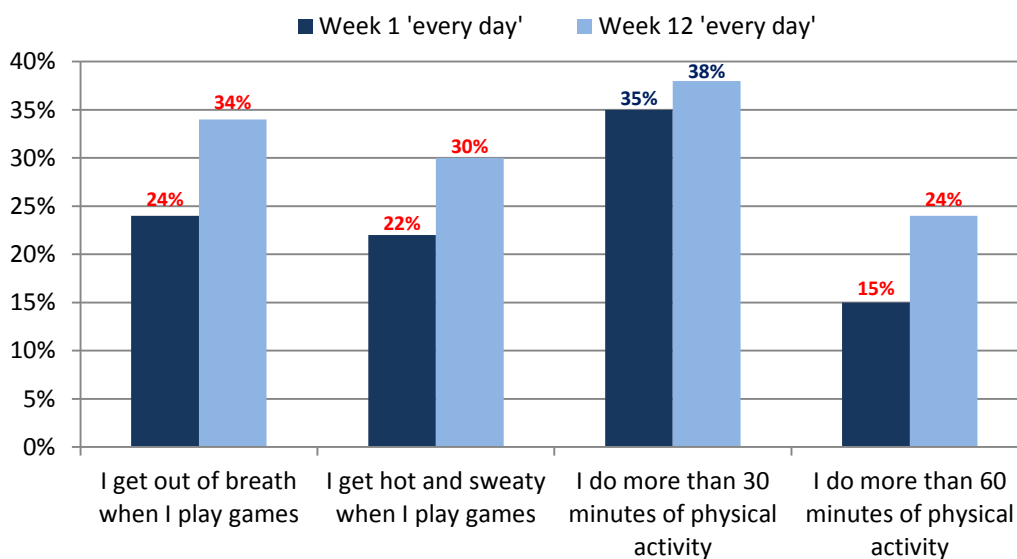
<sup>7</sup> cross-sectional and repeated-measures analysis.

<sup>8</sup> Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers, 2011.

breath and get hot and sweaty when they play games<sup>9</sup>. A positive, strong, statistically significant correlation between responses to the activity frequency and intensity questions indicate that the reported activity is of at least moderate intensity. Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show the percentages of children achieving these behaviours 'more than half the time' and 'every day'.



**Figure 4.3) Behaviour 'more than half the time' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**



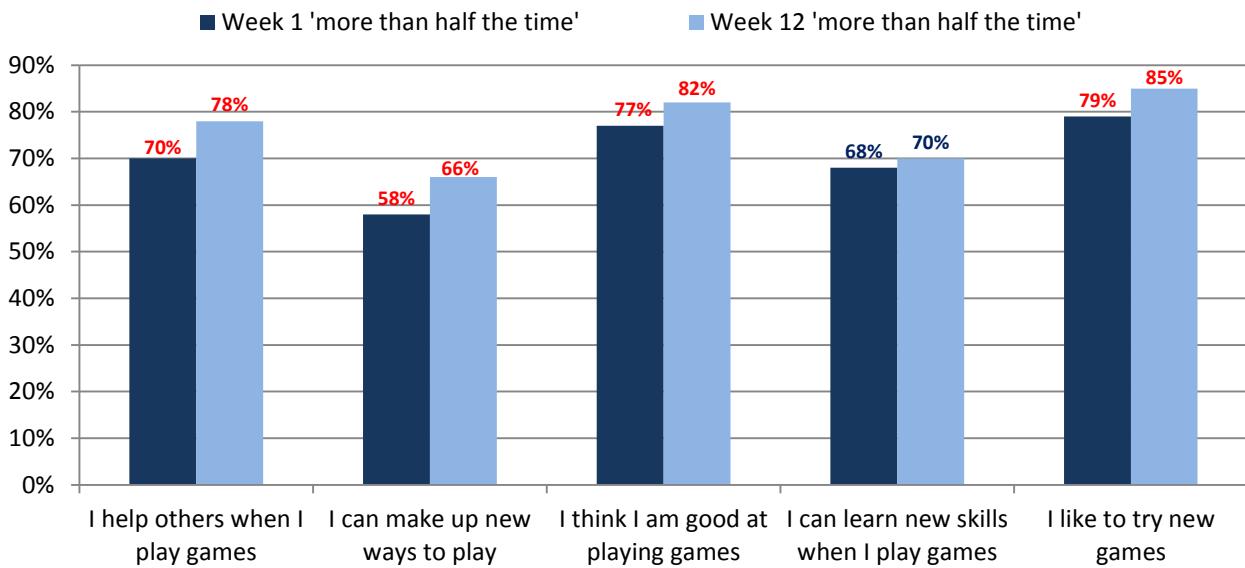
**Figure 4.4) Behaviour 'every day' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

### 4.3) Confidence

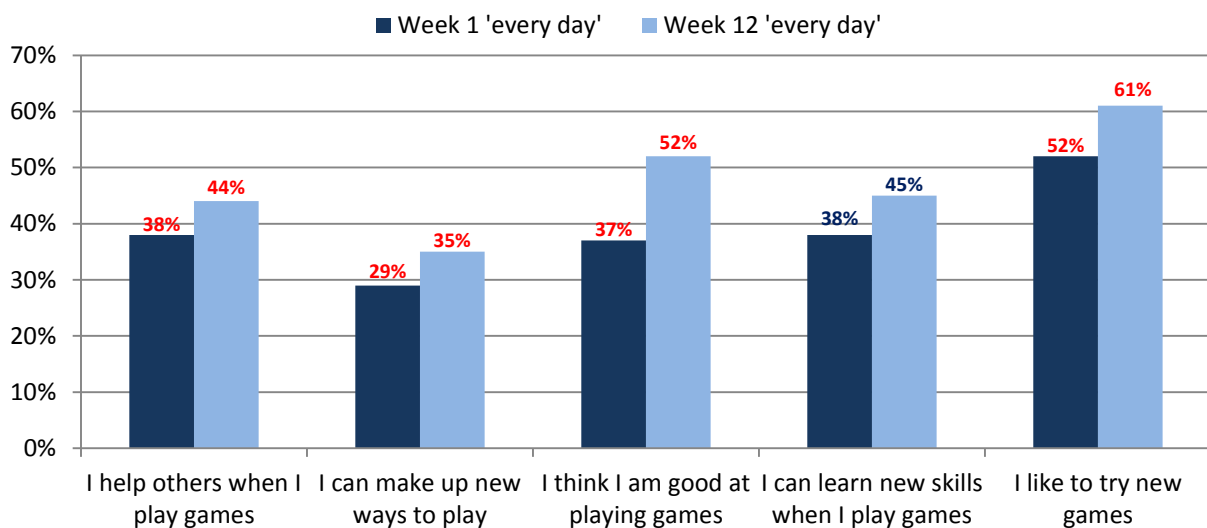
Confidence is measured by the Children's Survey through a number of questions relating to whether children feel able to learn and create new ways to play, whether they think they are good at playing games and whether they feel able to help others (figures 4.5 and 4.6). Confidence is aligned closely with creativity, aspirations, resilience and empathy, and questions are asked under a number of themes including 'Social Me' and 'Creative Me'. Analysis shows statistically significant increases in nearly all aspects relating to the confidence of Key Stage 2 participants: in the number of children helping others when they play games, thinking they are good at playing games, able to

<sup>9</sup> cross-sectional and repeated-measures analysis.

make up new ways to play and liking to try new games.



**Figure 4.5) Confidence 'more than half the time' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**



**Figure 4.6) Confidence 'every day' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

Interviews with lead deliverers at visit schools also suggest that Skills2PlaySport has a positive impact on children’s confidence and aspirations. For example, one of the deliverers interviewed stated:

*The school is really keen to encourage those less confident children who wouldn't normally get involved in sport to try new activities and opportunities...that's what we wanted to use Skills2PlaySport for really...those children involved in the session are now much more confident in the playground.*

(Teaching assistant deliverer, Canon Burrows C of Primary School)

Another spoke of the impact of the programme on the confidence of the young leaders helping to run the Skills2Play/Sport sessions:

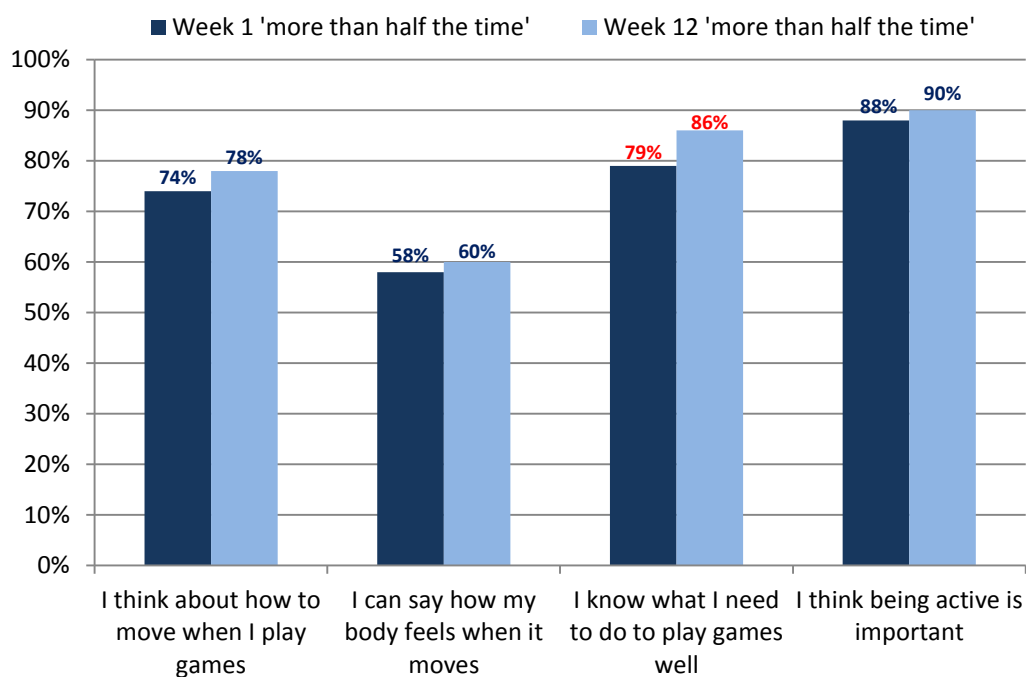
*You can see they are growing in confidence. At the beginning they were a little tentative and if the kids weren't listening they would not take authority. Now you can see they take control of the situation and will get the kids attention.*

(External coach deliverer, Laddingford St Mary's C of E Primary School)

During the focus groups in all visit schools, children expressed their enjoyment and enthusiasm for Skills2PlaySport sessions, many saying that they 'liked games' and thought they were 'good at games'. Researchers noted confidence gains in participants and their ability and willingness to help their peers (appendix E).

#### 4.4) Knowledge and understanding

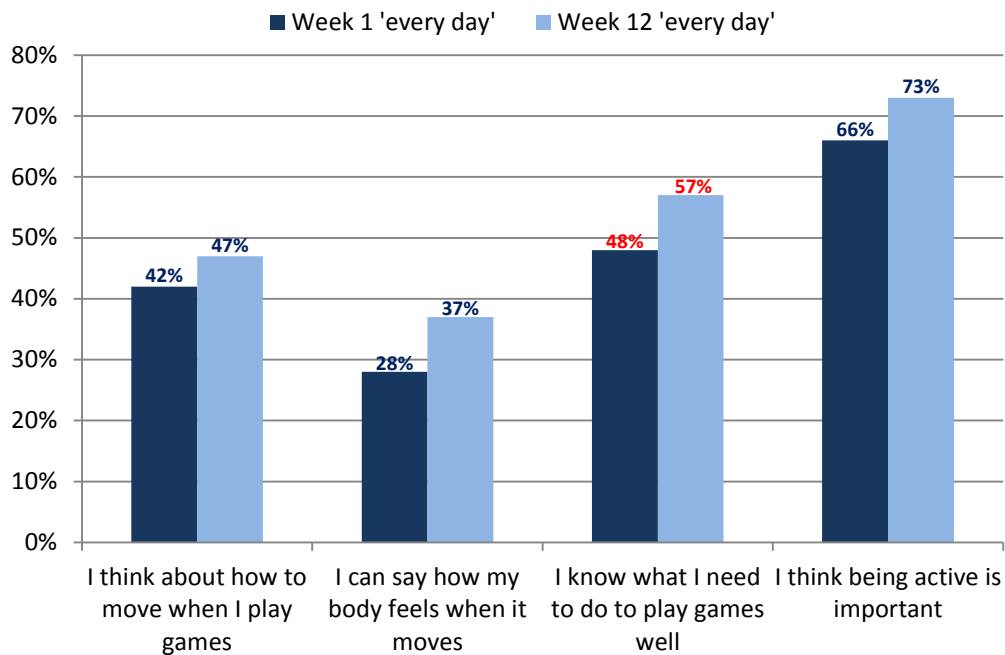
Figures 4.7 and 4.8 show the impact on the 'knowledge and understanding' of participants, assessed by asking the children whether they place importance on being active, whether they have the knowledge to make the movements necessary to play games well, whether they think about the ways in which they move and whether they are able to express this verbally. These relate to the 'Thinking Me' theme of the programme, as well as 'Physical Me' and 'Healthy Me'. Data indicate increases in all aspects relating to knowledge and understanding, and in particular, a statistically significant increase in respondents reporting that they know what to do to play games well<sup>10</sup>.



**Figure 4.7) Knowledge & Understanding 'more than half the time' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

<sup>10</sup> cross-sectional and repeated-measures analysis.





**Figure 4.8) Knowledge & Understanding 'every day' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

In visit schools, some deliverers were observed to raise participants' knowledge and understanding by asking questions throughout the session, such as "How else could I move around the hall?"; "When I run what should I do with my arms and legs?"; "Where should I be looking and what should I do with my head?" The children were observed to respond well to this form of guidance, rather than instruction, and most demonstrated in focus groups that they had gained knowledge and understanding relating to movements skills and to the benefits of physical activity (appendix E).

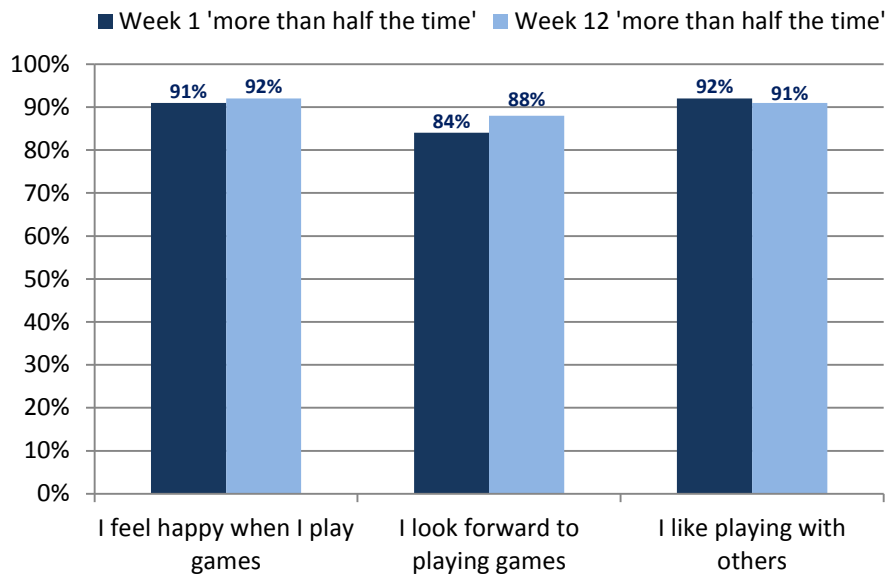
#### 4.5) Motivation and Attitudes

**KS2 Children's Survey data show that levels of motivation were high and attitudes were positive at week 1 and remained so at week 12.** Assessment of this aspect was undertaken by asking children about their attitudes to playing with others and their enjoyment of playing, with questions raised under various headings including 'Healthy Me' and 'Creative Me'. There was no significant change in this aspect. A high level of children reporting that they like playing with others, feel happy when they play games and look forward to playing games was maintained. This is reflected in the positive comments made by participants in focus groups (appendix E). In one visit school, the deliverer noted how much the children look forward to the Skills2PlaySport sessions:

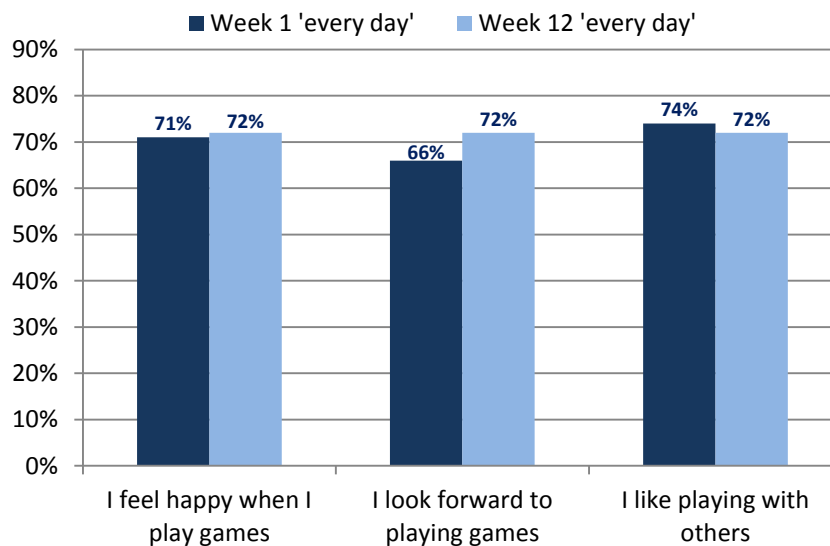
*They even stop me in the corridor now and say 'are we going to do this or that next week like we asked?' I am like 'yes, as promised I am sorting it out!' They are proud of their club as a result and they say their friends 'that's Ms Smith, she's my Skills2PlaySport teacher' or 'it is definitely still on this week?' which is great for me to hear.*

(Teaching assistant deliverer, Canon Burrows C of E Primary School)

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 show analysis of the motivational aspects of respondents' physical literacy over the 12 weeks of Skills2PlaySport.



**Figure 4.9) Motivation & Attitudes 'more than half the time' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**



**Figure 4.10) Motivation & Attitudes 'every day' at weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

Taken together with the measures for other components of physical literacy (behaviour, confidence and knowledge/understanding), data show that whilst most participants demonstrated high levels of motivation at week 1 (i.e. they expressed their enjoyment of playing games/doing physical activity), some lacked the confidence or knowledge to participate in or to try new things. At week 12, maintenance of this level of motivation (enjoyment/willingness) along with increases in the other components (behaviour, confidence and knowledge/understanding) indicate overall increases in physical literacy.

#### 4.6) Holistic outcomes

Data from visit schools delivering Skills2PlaySport supports evidence from the Children’s Survey, with deliverers highlighting wider impacts of the programme on children’s physical literacy. In addition to improvements in participants’ movement skills, deliverers noted the development of social and emotional skills and confidence, both amongst participants and in young leaders assisting with delivery. Illustrative comments from deliverers at visit schools are presented in panel 4.1. Comments from children participating in Skills2PlaySport at visit schools also speak to the holistic nature of the impact of the programme. These include reference to movement skills, social skills, resilience and confidence and illustrative examples are provided in panel 4.1.

##### Panel 4.1) Comments on holistic outcomes (KS2 Visit Schools)

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<u>Deliverers</u>	<u>Participants</u>
<i>They (young leaders) can lead most of the session. It gives them that knowledge and skills to adjust....those are the type of skills that will be really useful later on...they are thinking on their feet and reacting to how the kids are doing.</i>	<i>I didn’t know that it was better to be near the ground when you roll...I found it quite easy in the end.</i>
<i>There is a huge value in children running clubs for children...useful skills and experiences...developing their own confidence.</i>	<i>I learnt a lot but found it quite easy at the end.</i>
<i>The activities we provide equip the children with physical literacy. It supports the physical development, movement skills and body confidence of the children, but it also contributes to their physical, mental and social well-being.</i>	<i>I am quite good at it so I like to help my friends...some of the games were harder and so they needed my help.</i>
<i>Initially some of the children hated leading but now they are all enthusiastic.</i>	<i>We help each other and it is fun to show each other what to do too.</i>
	<i>I wasn’t very good but it was still really, really fun!</i>
	<i>I don’t think I am very good at hockey but I want to play it again!</i>

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During observations at visit schools, participants demonstrated improvements beyond their physical/movement skills. Whilst visits to schools running Skills2PlaySport took place at one timepoint only, observations within a session included enhanced understanding amongst children of their own movements and of what was required in order to achieve particular physical movements, as well as increased spatial awareness. In addition, the programme was observed to encourage children’s motivation to keep trying if they struggled with skills and to improve participants’ social skills, particularly in relation to their ability and willingness to assist peers. During one school visit in which the children were observed to assist one another, particularly enjoying the ‘team’ aspects of the session, this ‘social’ aspect was seen to enhance their progression in object control, stability and locomotive movements (appendix E). Whilst some aims of the programme have not yet been achieved in visit schools, the case studies in appendix E suggests a broad range of outcomes including improvements in confidence and aspirations, resilience, social and movement skills.

## 5) CONCLUSIONS

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Section 2 showed that deliverers of Skills2Play/Sport have responded positively to the programme. Skills2Play has been particularly welcomed as providing physical developmental opportunities for Key Stage 1 children. Research participants reported that the Skills2Play/Sport activity cards were useful in a number of respects: they aided delivery, especially amongst non-specialist staff and young leaders; enabled deliverers who had received training to pass their knowledge on to colleagues; provided new ideas; and engaged the children in activities. Deliverers reported ability to enlist assistance from staff and pupils in delivery is likely to enhance the sustainability of the programme by reducing reliance on a single deliverer and by helping to embed the programme within schools. Whilst common elements of delivery are apparent, data show that varying levels of understanding of the physical literacy aims of the programme affect delivery and that measurement of progress of children's physical literacy is not widely being undertaken in schools. Nevertheless, approximately 90% of respondents to the deliverer survey reported that the programme had added value to their school sport and PE provision; over 80% to their healthy lifestyle offer and 65% to their delivery across the curriculum.

Section 3 showed that the physical literacy of children participating in Skills2Play in visit schools had developed over the 12 week period of the programme. Progress was most noticeable in the youngest participants, with Year 1 children 'catching up' with their Year 2 peers over the course of the 12 weeks. In observations of the sessions, focus groups with the children and interviews with the lead deliverers, it was apparent that there had also been improvements in children's confidence, social skills, creativity and resilience. Children at week 12 were more willing and able to fully participate in the sessions; to demonstrate physical skills, to try again if their first attempts were not successful, to cooperate with and help each other, to demonstrate enhanced understanding and express themselves.

Section 4 showed that there were statistically significant increases over the 12 week period of participation in Skills2PlaySport in relation to the key aspects of physical literacy: behaviour (levels of physical activity), confidence, knowledge and understanding. Whilst data did not show statistically significant increases in motivation, levels for this aspect were high at week 1 and remained so at week 12. Increases in children's confidence were highlighted by deliverers at visit schools as significant and researchers observed that participants had gained confidence in their ability and willingness to assist their peers during sessions. These physical literacy outcomes align closely with the Youth Sport's Trust CARE model, with participants at both Key Stage 1 and 2 demonstrating increased abilities relating to creativity, aspirations, resilience and empathy.

## 6) RECOMMENDATIONS

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### HEADLINES

1. *Ensure training emphasises the physical literacy aims of the programme to achieve consistency in schools' delivery and to maximise programme outcomes.*
  2. *Include clear guidance in the training on measuring progress in physical literacy to encourage assessment of outcomes and to aid delivery within the curriculum.*
  3. *Emphasise the cross-curricular aspects of the programme to encourage schools to embed Skills2Play/Sport and enhance its sustainability.*
  4. *Continue evaluation through 2015/16 to increase sample sizes and enhance the robustness of evidence to inform programme development.*
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1. ***Ensure training emphasises the physical literacy aims of the programme to achieve consistency in schools' delivery and to maximise programme outcomes.*** Section 2 indicated varying levels of understanding of the physical literacy aims of Skills2Play/Sport amongst deliverers while data in sections 2, 3 and 4 from school visits highlighted the impact of this on both delivery and outcomes. Understanding the aims of the programme includes an appreciation of it as a vehicle to aid the the development of skills, confidence, knowledge and motivation for lifetime participation in physical activity. Ensuring these aims are consistently emphasised by all trainers will foster consistency in the knowledge and understanding of the deliverers, conveyed through their delivery, and in turn maximise impact on participants' physical literacy. In addition, whilst sections 2 and 3 showed that schools are widely recognising the benefits of the programme for Key Stage 1 children, emphasising the lifetime aspect of physical literacy may encourage further delivery to Key Stage 2 children and encourage a 'whole school' approach to increase participation and embed the programme in schools.
2. ***Include clear guidance in the training on measuring progress in physical literacy to encourage assessment of outcomes and to aid delivery within the curriculum.*** Sections 2 and 3 suggested that few schools are measuring participants' progress in physical literacy. In section 2, schools also reported competing demands for time and space. Providing schools with guidance to measure and demonstrate progress in the development of physical literacy through delivery of Skills2Play/Sport would both enhance the credibility of the programme and support the justification for allocation of school resources. The ability of deliverers to measure and demonstrate progress in children's physical literacy would aid self-awareness amongst participants, demonstrate how the programme can achieve curriculum objectives and provide evidence to garner wider support within schools. Sections 2 and 3 highlighted that whilst some schools have attempted to use the Multi-Skills Festival activity cards to gain a baseline measure of participants' physical literacy, such measurement was restricted to quantity of movement, for example, measuring the number of times a throw reached its target without measuring the quality of the throwing action. In visit schools, those utilising this method of measurement did not continue to do so, recognising the broader physical literacy aims and outcomes as sessions progressed. Guidance on measuring progress in physical literacy thereby needs to include quality of movement, motivation, confidence, and knowledge and understanding in order to accurately assess physical literacy.

- 3. *Emphasise the cross-curricular aspects of the programme to encourage schools to embed Skills2Play/Sport and enhance its sustainability.*** Section 2 indicated a willingness amongst schools to provide Skills2Play/Sport sessions within the school day, and a positive attitude to the new ideas presented by the programme. However, it also highlighted the desire expressed by deliverers for guidance on how to embed the programme in curriculum PE. Section 2 also indicated the popularity of Literacy and Numeracy Links amongst deliverers and the way in which these had been successfully incorporated into the Skills2Play sessions at a visit school. Emphasising the cross-curricular ways in which Skills2Play/Sport can assist schools in achieving their existing objectives, in PE and to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of other curriculum subjects, may encourage schools to embed the programme and enhance its sustainability.
  
- 4. *Continue evaluation through 2015/16 to increase sample sizes and enhance the robustness of evidence to inform programme development.*** Sections 3 and 4 showed overall progression in participating children's physical literacy. The expansion of the Key Stage 1 sample through 2015/16 would further evidence the impact of Skills2Play and increasing the sample size for repeated-measures analysis of Key Stage 2 Children's Survey would enhance the robustness of assessment for Skills2PlaySport. Increasing these sample sizes by extending evaluation and data collection through 2015/16 will be important to provide the robust evidence necessary to steer programme development and support the Skills2Play/Sport programme into the future.


APPENDIX A: SKILLS2PLAYSPORT CHILDREN'S SURVEY

(actual size A4 double-sided)

My name is:

My school is:

I am a:  Boy  Girl  I am age:



## SKILLS2PLAYSPORT

Please complete this Quiz in the **1<sup>st</sup> week** of your Skills2PlaySport activities.

**Physical me**

I get out of breath when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

I get hot and sweaty when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

I can learn new skills when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

I know what I need to do to play games well  every day  most days  some days  never

Please turn over

Please return all quizzes to:  
SPEAR, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1QU  
Thank you!

**Creative me**

I help others when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

I like playing games with others  every day  most days  some days  never

**Social me**

I can make up new ways to play  every day  most days  some days  never

I like to try new games  every day  most days  some days  never

**Thinking me**

I think about how to move when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

I can say how my body feels when it moves  every day  most days  some days  never

**Healthy me**

I think being active is important  every day  most days  some days  never

I feel happy when I play games  every day  most days  some days  never

## APPENDIX B: CHILDREN'S SURVEY DATA

Tables B1 to B5 show the breakdown of responses to the Children's Survey. Table B1 shows the data in relation to the constructs: behaviour, confidence, knowledge and understanding, and motivation and attitudes. Tables B2 to B5 show the responses to each question within the corresponding construct.

**Table B1) Construct Data for Weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

	<i>Behaviour</i>		<i>Confidence</i>		<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i>		<i>Motivation and Attitudes</i>	
	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12
Never	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Some days	30%	25%	17%	11%	11%	7%	3%	4%
Most days	59%	56%	61%	53%	48%	44%	30%	22%
Every day	9%	17%	21%	35%	39%	48%	66%	73%

**Table B2) Behaviour Data for Weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

	<i>I do more than 30 minutes of physical activity</i>		<i>I do more than 60 minutes of physical activity</i>		<i>I get out of breath when I play games</i>		<i>I get hot and sweaty when I play games</i>	
	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12
Never	7%	6%	18%	15%	14%	13%	16%	12%
Some days	27%	26%	36%	35%	38%	32%	37%	26%
Most days	31%	30%	31%	26%	24%	21%	25%	32%
Every day	35%	38%	15%	24%	24%	34%	22%	30%



**Table B3) Confidence Data for Weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

	<i>I can help others when I play games</i>		<i>I can make up new ways to play</i>		<i>I think I am good at playing games</i>		<i>I can learn new skills when I play games</i>		<i>I like to try new games</i>	
	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12
Never	5%	3%	11%	8%	6%	6%	5%	6%	4%	2%
Some days	25%	19%	31%	26%	17%	12%	27%	24%	17%	13%
Most days	32%	34%	29%	31%	40%	30%	30%	25%	27%	24%
Every day	38%	44%	29%	35%	37%	52%	38%	45%	52%	61%

**Table B4) Knowledge and Understanding Data for Weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

	<i>I think about how to move when I play games</i>		<i>I can say how my body feels when it moves</i>		<i>I know what I need to do to play games well</i>		<i>I think being active is important</i>	
	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12
Never	8%	5%	17%	13%	6%	3%	4%	4%
Some days	18%	17%	25%	27%	15%	11%	8%	6%
Most days	32%	31%	30%	23%	31%	29%	22%	17%
Every day	42%	47%	28%	37%	48%	57%	66%	73%

**Table B5) Motivation and Attitudes Data for Weeks 1 & 12 (n=584)**

	<i>I feel happy when I play games</i>		<i>I look forward to playing games</i>		<i>I like playing games with others</i>	
	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12	Week 1	Week 12
Never	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%
Some days	7%	6%	13%	9%	7%	7%
Most days	20%	20%	18%	16%	18%	19%
Every day	71%	72%	66%	72%	74%	72%

## APPENDIX C: METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

To assess the impact of the programme, SPEAR developed a Children’s Survey for completion by participants in Skills2PlaySport (Key Stage 2) at weeks 1 and 12 of participation (appendix A). The survey aims to assess key aspects of physical literacy: behaviour, confidence, motivation, knowledge and understanding. The target sample of survey returns from 300 unique children at each time point is based on a maximum margin of error of less than +/-5%. A total of 767 surveys from 584 unique children were received for cross-sectional analysis, with surveys from 175 unique children received for repeated-measures analysis at weeks 1 and 12.

An observation protocol was developed for Skills2Play (Key Stage 1) observations conducted during school visits and schedules were devised for lead deliverer interviews and children’s focus groups to be undertaken during all school visits. In addition, Information Sheets for schools, Informed Consent forms, Data Protection Guidance and Deliverers’ Guidance for Quiz Completion were developed and administered. Contact with all stakeholders was maintained throughout the research and table C1 provides an overview of the relationship management activity undertaken.

**Table C1) Overview of relationship management activity**

Total calls placed (number of calls)	923
Contact attempted (number of schools) <sup>11</sup>	472
Contact established (number of schools)	172
Population of schools delivering KS2 activities Jan-Mar 2015 <sup>12</sup>	19
Schools recruited to SPEAR panel (surveys & visits) <sup>13</sup>	20

As highlighted in the Interim Report (March 2015), the number of schools available to the research was lower than anticipated (table C2). This was mainly due to two factors:

- 1) the large proportion of schools choosing to run the programme with Key Stage 1 children only, resulting in less schools available to facilitate the Key Stage 2 children’s survey; and
- 2) of those schools running the programme with Key Stage 2 children, some started their Skills2PlaySport sessions later than January 2015 and were unable to complete a week 1 children’s survey at the beginning of January and a week 12 survey at the end of March 2015 (data collection period).

<sup>11</sup> Includes contacts provided end of Jan 2015 for inclusion in cross-sectional analysis.

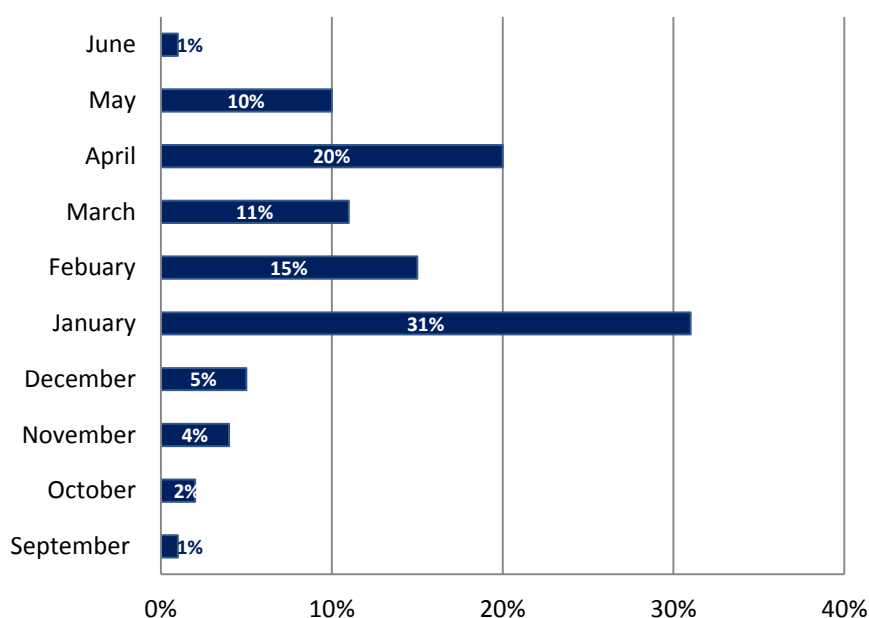
<sup>12</sup> A total of 49 schools reported their intention to run sessions with KS2 children but only 19 schools were doing so in the data collection period Jan-Mar 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Liaison with 14 schools re. KS2 surveys plus 6 visit schools (KS1 and KS2).

**Table C2) Schools running Skills2PlaySport with Key Stage 2 children**

Total number of contacts provided	257
Number of schools responding to contact	115
Total number of schools running in Jan 2015	86
Number of schools running with KS2 children starting Jan 2015	28
Number of schools running with KS2 children for less than 12 weeks	9
Number of schools available for Children’s Survey completion at Weeks 1 & 12	19

Data from the Deliverer Survey, shown in figure C1, also demonstrates the number of schools delivering to Key Stage 2 children within the data collection period, with less than a third of respondents reporting that their sessions started in January 2015.



**Figure C1) Date of starting Skills2Play/Sport sessions in 2014/15 (n=84)**

Given the smaller number of schools available for Key Stage 2 survey completion, a cross-sectional analysis of Children’s Survey data was added to the research to supplement the repeated-measures analysis. It was agreed with the Youth Sport Trust that in order to maximise the sample of Key Stage 2 survey returns, SPEAR would extend the relationship management process undertaken with schools, continue facilitation of Children’s Survey returns and request that schools return week 1 *and/or* week 12 surveys to enable inclusion of data outside of the collection period. A cross-sectional analysis of all data (including weeks 1 and 12 data from different children, as opposed to weeks 1 and 12 from the same child) was therefore undertaken in addition to the repeated-measures analysis of data at both timepoints for the same children.