

The Double Club Evaluation Interim Report

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National Foundation for Educational Research



**Research Report No
DCSF-RR101**

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ISBN 978 1 84775 422 6

April 2009

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Acknowledgements

We wish to express our sincere thanks to all the staff and young people who participated in the first strand of the evaluation and gave generously of their time. We would also like to thank the members of the project steering group, who have provided valuable information, support and guidance.

Executive summary

The Double Club (DC) programme

Double Club is an in-school extension of the Playing for Success programme, working with underachieving pupils in Key Stage 3 to improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. It provides an innovative 'double experience' that combines classroom education, with coaching in football or another sport. Young people attend at least twice a week in groups of approximately 15. In 2007/08, Double Club consisted of 15 sports clubs; with 48 schools and about 3,000 young people.

About the evaluation

The evaluation of the DC programme is being carried out for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) by researchers based at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). This interim report focuses on the findings of the first strand of the evaluation, providing qualitative data about how schools have implemented the DC initiative, and how any positive impacts have been achieved. It presents findings from case-study visits to five DCs selected as examples of good practice. Four of the visits took place during the summer term of 2008 and the fifth took place in January 2009. As part of each visit, the team carried out an interactive survey with young people participating in DC, using an Audience Response System (ARS). This system enables young people to respond to a set of standard questions using a personal touchpad. A total of 51 young people participated in the ARS survey. More in-depth responses were gained through interviews with 20 young people, five DC centre managers / DC co-ordinators, five DC teachers and seven members of school teaching staff.

Key findings

- The evaluation identified four main models of organisation in the case study DCs, each of which was felt to be appropriate in the local context:
 1. Full-time DC teacher based in each participating school.
 2. DC delivered by a teacher who is not based in the school.
 3. DC delivered by a member of school's own teaching staff.
 4. DC delivered by both a DC teacher not based in the school and members of the school teaching staff.
- The evidence from the five case studies suggests that DC has been successful in achieving its aims of motivating and re-engaging underachieving young people.
- Teachers and young people perceived the DC programme very positively. They saw it as an opportunity for lower-attaining young people to get additional support with their learning.
- Young people told us they enjoyed taking part in DC. Most young people thought DC had helped them to improve their learning (especially in literacy) and self-confidence.
- Local evaluation results showed that the majority of young people made progress in an adapted Key Stage 2 English test (30 out of 43 improved by one or two levels).

- All interviewees thought that young people's school attendance had improved during their participation in DC, and one school provided evidence to support this.
- Key features identified in this study as promoting the success of DC are:
 1. The programme's appeal to schools and young people (the focus on basic skills combined with the popularity of professional sport).
 2. Pupil selection (in particular selecting young people who have levels of literacy and numeracy below the expected level for their age, an interest in the sport offered by the DC and those who lack self-confidence)
 3. Learning content, style and environment (offering a motivating and attractive learning experience).
 4. The added value of the sports coaching sessions (promoting sports skills, teamwork and enjoyment).

1. Introduction

This is the interim report of the Arsenal Double Club Evaluation, presenting information from five case studies. The final report will contain information from an analysis of quantitative data (pupil assessment results).

1.1 The Double Club programme

The Double Club programme was established in 1998, by *Arsenal in the Community*. The programme aimed to provide young people with a 'double experience' of classroom-based learning through football, together with a football coaching session. It was developed to motivate and re-engage underachieving young people and to improve attainment, by harnessing young people's interest in football. Originally, the programme operated as an after school literacy programme in primary schools. However, by 2004, the project had developed different modules such as numeracy and ICT, and was being run during curriculum time as a Key Stage 3 programme.

The DCSF has contributed funding towards the Key Stage 3 programme since 2004. The Department provides funding to cover the essential costs of the programme and has asked Arsenal in the Community to work with other English sports clubs to help set up and develop Double Clubs (DCs) in their local schools. In 2006/07, seven sports clubs, through their Playing for Success (PfS) Centres¹, were running DCs in one or more of their secondary schools. By 2007/08, the number of sports clubs involved had risen to 15 with 48 schools and about 3000 secondary young people participating in the programme.

¹ PfS is a partnership between the DCSF, local authorities and a wide range of sports. Through the PfS initiative, Study Support Centres have been established at a range of professional sports clubs. PfS uses the sports environment to motivate and raise the educational standards of underachieving pupils, focusing on numeracy, literacy and ICT at Key Stages 2 and 3. Typically, each pupil receives 20 hours tuition.

2. About the research

The aims, design and methods of the study are outlined below.

2.1 Aims of the study

The main aims of this evaluation are to determine the effectiveness of the DC programme, to identify good practice and to provide evidence on how best to operationalise DCs in a wider roll out.

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How is the DC programme being implemented in different schools?
2. Does DC achieve its objectives and how is this achieved?
3. What is the impact of DC on pupils' motivation and self-esteem, and what are pupils' and teachers' perceptions of the programme?
4. What is the impact of DC on pupil attainment?
5. Are some models of the DC scheme more effective than others?

This report focuses mainly on four of the research questions. Although this report provides some evidence in relation to Question 4 (impact on attainment), the final report will look at this in greater depth, as this is being addressed in the quantitative strand of the evaluation.

2.2 Design and methods

The research design combines an analysis of qualitative data to illustrate key processes with large-scale analysis of outcome data.

There are two strands to the evaluation:

- **Strand 1** focuses on the implementation of DC, its impact on pupil motivation and self-esteem, and perceptions of the programme in five DCs. This in-depth focus on a small number of schools supplements a large-scale outcome evaluation looking at the impact of DC on pupils (Strand 2). It provides qualitative data about how schools have implemented the initiative, and how any positive impacts have been achieved.
- **Strand 2** of the study seeks to establish the impact of DC on pupil attainment by obtaining relevant information about participating young people from DCs and matching it to the National Pupil Database. The progress of DC students in Key Stage 3 will then be compared with the progress of similar students who have not attended the programme.

This interim report presents the main findings from Strand 1 of the research.

For Strand 1 of the research, five DCs were selected to reflect the different models of the programme in operation. Advice on selection was received from the National Double Club co-ordinator. The schools were selected as good practice schools, and therefore are not necessarily representative of all DCs. However, as these were selected as good practice schools, they can provide useful lessons to other sports clubs and schools who are running, or considering running a DC. The evaluation team made visits to four of the five case-study

DCs during the summer term of 2008. A visit to the fifth case-study DC took place in January 2009².

As part of each visit, the team carried out an interactive survey with young people participating in DC, using an Audience Response System (ARS). This system enables young people to respond to a set of standard questions using a personal touchpad. Their responses are then collated and displayed on a screen. More in-depth responses were gained from paired interviews with young people, interviews with members of school staff, and interviews with centre managers/DC coordinators and DC teachers.

In total, we interviewed:

- 20 young people
- seven members of school teaching staff
- five DC teachers
- five centre managers / DC co-ordinators.

A total of 51 young people participated in the ARS survey (ranging from nine to 13 young people in each school). These numbers reflect the number of young people participating in DC, in each of the case-study schools. The young people involved in the interviews also took part in the survey.

² The visit took place later, as it was not possible to arrange a visit during the summer term.

3. Main findings

This section reports the main findings from visits to the case study Double Clubs and schools. As explained in Section 2.2, the case study schools were selected as good practice schools.

The key findings are as follows:

- The evaluation identified four main models of organisation in the case study DCs:
 1. Full-time DC teacher based in each participating school.
 2. DC delivered by a teacher not based in the school.
 3. DC delivered by a member of school's own teaching staff.
 4. DC delivered by both a DC teacher not based in the school and members of the school teaching staff.

Each model was felt to be appropriate in the local context.

- Young people enjoyed taking part in DC. Most young people thought DC had helped them to improve their learning (especially writing and reading) and self-confidence.
- Local evaluation results showed that the majority of young people made progress in an adapted Key Stage 2 English test (30 out of 43 improved by one or two levels).
- All interviewees thought that young people's school attendance had improved during their participation in DC, and one school provided evidence to support this.
- School staff identified several organisational benefits from their involvement in DC, including raising achievement for participating pupils and providing a broader curriculum offer.
- Key aspects of DC in achieving its aims were: the programme's appeal (learning linked to professional sport); selecting the right pupils; providing a relevant and engaging programme of work in a supportive environment; and providing opportunities to play sports.
- Young people said they found the work in DC more interesting and easier to understand than school lessons.
- The opportunity to play sport and to receive coaching attracted many young people to take part. However, a minority were not particularly interested in this aspect of DC.
- Taking part in sports provided opportunities for young people to demonstrate teamwork, develop sports skills and improve their fitness.

3.1 How the Double Club is operating in schools

The five DCs we visited have been operating for varying lengths of time, ranging from one to four years. Four of the DCs are associated with football clubs, and one is associated with a rugby club. The number of secondary schools involved with the programme, in the case study areas, ranges from one to ten.

3.1.1 Models of organisation and delivery

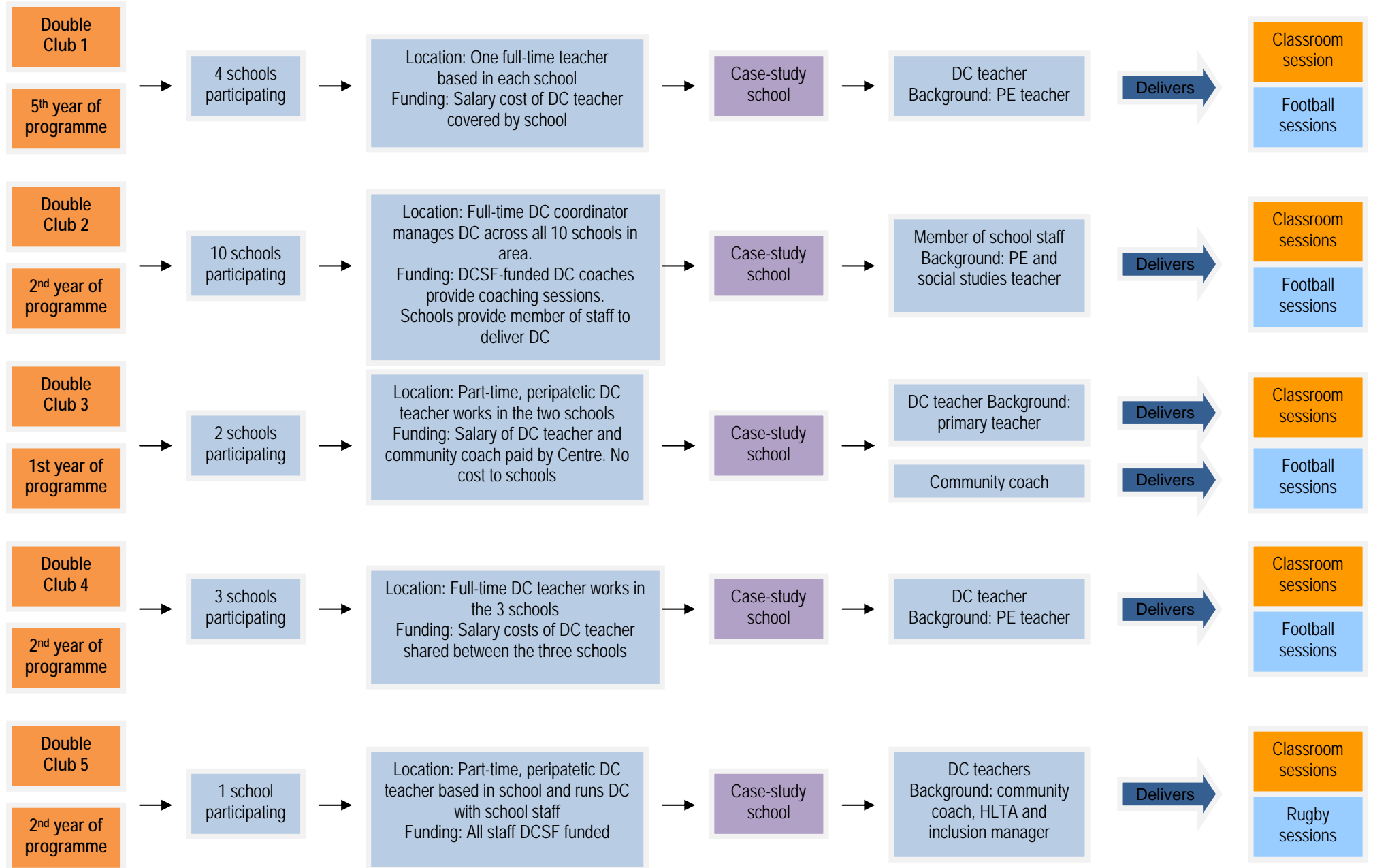
As Figure 1 shows, each of the DC case studies has approached the delivery of the programme in a different way. There are differences in the background, employment, funding and deployment of staff.

There are four main models of DC organisation and delivery amongst the DC case studies:³

1. Full-time DC teacher based in each participating school.
2. External DC teachers coming in to schools to deliver DC sessions.
3. DC sessions delivered by member of school teaching staff.
4. DC sessions delivered by both an external DC teacher, and members of school teaching staff.

³ Other DCs may have different models in place, but this was not explored as part of this evaluation.

Figure 1 Approaches to implementing double Club (DC) in case-study schools



Model 1: Full-time DC teacher based in each participating school

In one Double Club, a full-time DC teacher was based in each of the participating schools, delivering both the classroom and football coaching sessions. The participating schools paid the salary costs of their DC teacher.

Model 2: External DC teachers deliver DC sessions

In two of the Double Clubs, peripatetic teachers came in to school to deliver DC sessions. In one of these clubs, the salary cost of the DC teacher was shared between the three participating schools. The DC teacher in this area provided the classroom and the coaching sessions. In the other club, the salary cost of the DC teacher was absorbed by the local football club's community trust. The community trust in this area also provided a coach to deliver football sessions outside of school hours, at no cost to the schools.

One of the key reasons for the approach taken to delivering the DC programme was a concern that schools will not be able to or interested in fully-funding the programme. One club had discussed possible models with interested schools and whilst it was felt that individual schools could not cover the salary costs of a full-time DC teacher, sharing the costs of a teacher between three schools would be more manageable. In the other area, the decision was taken to provide the programme at no cost to the two participating schools. In this case, the DC programme was running at a financial loss. However, the community trust had decided to keep funding the DC initiative, as they felt it had a positive impact on participating young people, and had been very well received by schools.

Model 3: DC sessions delivered by member of school teaching staff

In the fourth Double Club, participating schools provided a member of their own teaching staff to deliver the DC sessions. The Club offered to provide community coaches to run football sessions at no additional cost to the schools. However, in the school we visited, the DC teacher was a qualified P.E. teacher and the school was a strong football school, and so the decision had been taken to have the same member of teaching staff deliver both the classroom session and the football coaching. All other schools in this area used the community coaches. A full-time DC co-ordinator, funded through Football Foundation, managed the delivery of DC across all participating schools, providing resources and advice to DC teachers or help with classroom skills. This model was adopted because it was felt to be the best way of maximising the number of schools able to participate in the DC programme. Ten schools were running DC sessions in this area.

Model 4: DC sessions delivered by both an external DC teacher, and members of school teaching staff

In the fifth Double Club, DC sessions were delivered by two members of school staff: a higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) and an inclusion manager; and an external DC teacher employed by the rugby club. The HLTA planned and delivered the literacy and numeracy lessons, with assistance from the external DC teacher who adapted the lesson materials to make them relevant to the rugby club. The external DC teacher led lessons on healthy living and the sports sessions, with assistance from the HLTA. For all lessons, the class (consisting of up to 20 young people) was divided into three 'teams', with the three members of staff working with one team each. In this DC, staffing costs were covered by the DC funding received from the DCSF. This was the only secondary school involved in the DC initiative in this area.

In three of the five case-study areas, volunteers helped to run the DC classroom sessions. Work experience and gap year students helped in two schools, in order to give them an opportunity to experience working in a non-traditional educational setting. In another school, the assistant head of year provided additional support and a member of the school administration team gave up her free time to work on a one-to-one basis with the young people in the class. Members of school staff also regularly observed DC classroom lessons in order to develop their understanding of the programme, and with a view to running DC in school themselves in future.

3.1.2 Selecting young people to participate in Double Club

All of the schools we visited became involved in Double Club because they wanted to motivate and re-engage underachieving young people and improve attainment levels in their school. Two of the schools had high numbers of young people with English as an additional language (EAL) and wanted to improve young people's communication skills.

The schools decided which year groups they would like to involve in the programme. Double Club teachers then worked with members of the school staff (such as learning support co-ordinators and heads of year) to identify young people whom they thought would benefit most from the programme.

3.1.3 Year groups and number of young people involved

The case study DCs involved a range of year groups and cohorts of young people in Key Stage 3. In most of the schools, DC teachers worked with young people from more than one year group, although one school had selected young people in Year 7 only. This school chose to focus on Year 7 pupils to help them with their transition to secondary school. The DC teacher was a qualified primary teacher and it was felt that this helped smooth the transition for participating young people.

Young people in most of the case study schools attended DC sessions for one term. Four DC groups had a maximum of 15 young people. The other school offered DC to about 20 young people at a time, although this group was then divided into three smaller groups, with one adult working with each group.

Details of the number of young people involved in the five schools are provided in the Appendix.

3.1.4 Double Club classroom lessons

In each of the schools we visited, classroom sessions were delivered in curriculum time, in a dedicated DC classroom. Young people attended at least twice a week in small groups. The smaller class sizes were seen as having a number of benefits for the young people involved, including opportunities for:

- greater interaction between the DC teacher and the class
- more personal style of teaching
- more focused attention on individual young people in the class
- access to support as soon as they need it.

The group is small with focused attention. In a class of 20-25 it's easy to get away without reading, but here during most lessons they are reading out loud to each other.

[DC teacher]

The main motivating factor for attending Double Club is that we give them a voice. We allow them to express themselves in an appropriate way, because it is normally a small group with a high staff to pupil ratio.

[Member of the school teaching staff]

Three of the five case-study schools focussed exclusively on literacy, and two included both literacy and a numeracy component. One school also ran classes on healthy living.

The case-study schools differed as to whether they chose to make Double Club an alternative to core subjects for pupils, or to make it an addition to teaching in these subjects. In four of the schools, Double Club was time-tabled so that young people would not miss core subjects (English, mathematics and science) although they could miss classes in any Foundation subject. In one school, however, young people did miss core subjects to attend DC sessions. None of the schools offered catch-up programmes for the lessons missed. As one school teacher explained, *'We feel the benefits of attending DC outweigh everything else.'*

3.1.5 Double Club resources and work sheets

The DC classroom sessions are designed to engage young people in their learning through the use of colourful and topical sports-based materials which reflect the interests of many of the young people in the group. (Further information on young people's views on the sports focus is presented in Section 4.3.)

DC teachers in each of the case study schools used a mixture of Arsenal Double Club resources (adapted to incorporate their club's name, logos and players) and materials they developed themselves.

The engagement with the football club or its community partnership is key, as through them we get access to the brand, which we can then use in the resources.

[DC co-ordinator]

The resources from [Arsenal] are brilliant and spark off other ideas. It's about knowing your kids, and adapting the materials that way and also making sure that everything is [name of club] based.

[DC teacher]

In one area, resources were produced by a central DC coordinator and distributed to all participating schools. DC teachers in the schools we visited also shared their ideas and resources with DC teachers in other clubs via email.

3.2 The impact of Double Club and how this is achieved

This section presents evidence from the case studies concerning two of the research questions, namely:

Does DC achieve its objectives and how is this achieved?

What is the impact of DC on pupils' motivation and self-esteem, and what are pupils' and teachers' perceptions of the programme?

3.2.1 Is DC achieving its objectives?

Double Club was developed to motivate and re-engage underachieving young people and to improve attainment, by harnessing young people's interest in football. As Scott Cohen, the National Double Club coordinator, explained:

Our aim in the classroom is to develop and increase pupils' competency, enjoyment and confidence with words, numbers and other subject areas by using their love of playing football and interest in the game, through curriculum linked resources. On the football side, it's to develop their football skills, fitness levels, and teamwork in a fun and safe environment.

The case study interviewees said that involvement in Double Club had been successful in achieving its aims of motivating and re-engaging underachieving young people. As well as giving their views of its *perceived* impact on attainment, several provided evidence from their own evaluations of pupils' progress during their involvement in Double Club. As part of Strand 2 of the evaluation, National Curriculum Assessment data from Year 9 pupils who attended DC in 2007/08 will be compared with data from similar Year 9 pupils who did not attend DC, in order to provide a statistical appraisal of the impact of the scheme.

3.2.2 What are the benefits of participating in Double Club for young people?

The DC teachers, members of school teaching staff and young people we interviewed all spoke very highly of the DC programme and provided many examples of the positive impact of the programme on young people's attainment, self-esteem and motivation.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on what pupils enjoy about DC

We wanted to know what young people enjoyed about going to Double Club. We provided a list of six options and invited young people to select all the options that were true for them.

- The majority of young people (39 out of 51) said that they enjoyed going to Double Club to *improve their learning*. The same proportion (39) enjoyed *playing sport*.
- Two-thirds of the young people enjoyed *visiting the stadium* (34).
- Over half of the young people enjoyed the *prizes* (29) and a similar proportion (27) said they enjoyed going to Double Club to improve their *confidence*.
- When asked the one thing they enjoyed most about going to DC, the most common response was *improving my learning*.

3.2.3 How is young people's progress measured?

Each of the five case study schools tracked the progress made by young people involved in the DC programme. Progress was tracked through setting personal targets and assessment results (adapted Key Stage 2 papers).

Setting personal targets

Three of the five case study schools set personal targets with pupils. In these schools, young people were asked to set targets for themselves for literacy, numeracy and sport, during their first week of attendance. Some examples of targets include: 'to improve my spelling skills', 'to have more confidence with speaking tasks', 'to work better with a partner or in a group' or 'to pass the ball more accurately'. Each young person set between one and four targets that they would work towards during the course of the next few weeks. Young people kept a record of their targets in their DC file. The DC teacher also kept a copy to refer to and discuss with the young people during and at the end of the programme.

Adapted Key Stage 2 papers

The QCA has given permission for the DC programme to adapt and bring together different questions from past Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Assessment papers and put them into a sporting context. The same marking scheme is used as for the original papers, enabling DC teachers to get a '*fairly crude national curriculum level*' for participating young people. In each of the five schools, young people are tested at the beginning of the programme and again at the end of their involvement.

One of the case-study DCs has also undertaken their own analysis of National Curriculum results, which entailed comparing the changes in levels from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 for DC pupils with a group of other (non-DC) young people in the school.

3.2.4 Impact of Double Club on young people's attainment

In each of the five schools, DC teachers said young people's performance levels in English had improved after participating in the programme. Three of the five schools shared data from their adapted Key Stage 2 National Curriculum assessments with the research team (see Table 1). The small numbers of pupils in these local evaluations reflects the numbers of young people attending Double Club in 2007/08. Strand 2 of the analysis, which will examine Key Stage 3 National Curriculum data, will provide a more robust analysis of the impact of DC on young people's attainment, with larger numbers of young people included in the analysis and the ability to control for the other factors which may affect attainment such as gender or prior attainment.

Findings from the self-evaluation data suggest that the majority of young pupils in the three schools made progress during their involvement with DC (see Table 1). Most pupils had improved by at least one level in English and some had gone up two levels.

Table 1 Schools' self-evaluations of progress made by young people in English after one term of DC

	Year group	No. of young people				Total
		Up 2 levels	Up 1 level	Up sub-level(s)	No change	
School 1	9	5	7	0	1	13
School 2	7	0	5	6	0	11
School 3	7	2	7	0	3	12
	8	0	6	0	5	11

One case study school also provided their analysis of the Key Stage 3 maths results. This data showed that most young people (eight out of 13) had gone up at least one level, three young people had gone up two levels and one young person had gone up three levels. Data collected by this school from a comparison group of pupils with similar characteristics, showed that a higher proportion of DC pupils had improved by at least one level at Key Stage 3 in English and maths, compared to pupils who had not participated in the DC programme.

In one area, where young people attended DC for a whole school year, the DC Co-ordinator assessed pupils' English performance each term. The test results showed that the biggest improvement in attainment took place at the end of the first term. After that, attainment levels appeared to reach a plateau. The DC teacher felt that the fact that young people maintained the same grade was a positive outcome as it demonstrated security in the grading band. However, she agreed with the school that the following year they would change the length of time young people spent in DC from a year to a term.

I think... it's the first term that is the initial boost. That's the wow factor and the 'this is new, this is my intervention and this is me trying'. They've then got that basis to progress. It made me think, let's do it for one term with the kids, instead.

[DC teacher]

In four of the five case study schools, the young people we interviewed told us they felt being involved with DC had improved their reading and writing.

It's helped me catch up with my English lessons, because when I was excluded I missed a year.

[Year 8 pupil]

You remember the little hints, they stick in your head. Sometimes [name of DC teacher] like dragged on but it was good because he got all them little hints in your head.

[Year 8 pupil]

In the remaining case study school, the purpose of attending DC (to improve literacy and numeracy) was not made explicit to participating young people and as a result they perceived the benefits and impact of the programme differently to the other young people we interviewed. The young people in this case study school did not report any progress in their literacy or numeracy skills or feel that their confidence in these areas had improved. Whilst they enjoyed going to DC, they often described the main benefit to them as the opportunity to miss lessons and to do extra sport.

It's good because you get out of lessons. If they said 'You are going to do literacy and numeracy', then I probably wouldn't have gone. We haven't done none of that... It's about the sport, I want to be a PE teacher at primary school.

[Year 7 pupil]

In this school, five out of nine young people responding to the ARS said the best thing about being able to do sport at DC was missing lessons, which was not an answer mentioned by young people attending other DCs. Only one young person in this school said that the thing they enjoyed the most about DC was improving their learning, which was the most popular answer among young people in other DCs.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on pupils' attainment

We wanted to find out young people's views on how Double Club had helped them with their schoolwork. Young people were given a list of four options and asked to select all that were true for them.

- The majority of the young people said that Double Club had helped improve their *writing* (41 out of 51) and *reading* (34).
- Under half of the young people (22) felt that Double Club had helped *improve their computer skills*.
- In the two schools that focused on mathematics as well as English, the majority felt that it had helped them to improve their *maths* (16 out of 22).

3.2.5 Impact of Double Club on young people's self-confidence, motivation and self-esteem

DC teachers and members of the school teaching staff felt that the DC programme had had an impact on young people's self-confidence, motivation and self-esteem. One aspect of confidence mentioned by several interviewees, was young people's willingness to answer questions in class.

You see the pupils who come in and aren't very confident. They did a questionnaire at the end of Double Club and they said that they didn't want to put their hand up in lessons but after Double Club they feel more confident and better in their lessons they go to. The feedback from teachers has been brilliant, they say the pupils have become more confident around the school and seem happier.

[DC teacher]

When teachers ask questions in your lessons, some people get scared. But now [name of DC teacher] has shown us - don't be scared; speak it isn't exactly going to kill you!

[Year 8 pupil]

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on self-confidence and motivation

We wanted to find out young people's views on the different ways in which Double Club had helped them. Young people were given a list of five options and asked to select any that were true for them.

- Over half of young people felt that Double Club had helped them be a *more confident person* (32 out of 51), *enjoy school more* (31) and *learn not to give up* (28).
- Just under half the young people (23) agreed that Double Club had helped them *be more interested in their lessons* and a similar proportion (21) felt that Double Club had helped them to *get on better with other teachers in their school*.

The ARS results suggest that most young people felt that DC contributed to their self-confidence, enjoyment of school and persistence, but they were less sure about its impact in on other lessons or on their relationships with other teachers.

3.2.6 Impact of Double Club on young people's attendance

As well as improvements in attainment, motivation and self-esteem, teachers in all five schools felt that the DC programme had helped improve the attendance of many of the young people involved. One school provided evidence to support this. In this school, seven out of 13 pupils had achieved 100 per cent school attendance by the end of the programme, with the biggest increase for one young person being from 84 per cent in the previous term to 100 per cent attendance during the term s/he took part in the programme.

Both staff and young people from all DCs recognised the impact on attendance.

I think it has given some of our more difficult pupils one of the only reasons why they will come to school a lot of the time... Over the years with Double Club, we have dealt with a lot of pupils who are at risk of exclusion. For a very hardcore group of kids, you have given them a reason for wanting to come to school, and given them an environment where they can achieve and feel that they are actually gaining something. That has a knock on effect because you know if they are here they're going to be going to other lessons as well through the day.

[Member of teaching staff]

Say sometimes you get up in the morning and you've got a crap day, which I had today... when I knew I had this... I wanted to come in.

[Year 8 pupil]

3.3 The impact of Double Club on participating schools

In each of the schools we visited, members of the school leadership team were supportive of DC and the programme was well known in the school. In the case study areas where DC teachers are external to the school, members of school staff told us that they have a good working relationship with the DC teacher and that communication between the DC teacher and the school is excellent. In one case study area, participating schools had been actively involved in the recruitment of the DC teacher, and on appointment, the DC co-ordinator had taken the DC teacher to meet with key members of staff and departments before the programme began.

DC teachers and members of teaching staff worked together to identify pupils they thought would benefit most from the programme and information and feedback on participating young people's progress was shared throughout the programme.

All of the members of staff we spoke to wanted their school to continue its involvement with the programme and said that they would or already had recommended the programme to teachers in other schools.

The main benefits of participating in DC for the school were described as:

- improved results (including improvements in National Curriculum Assessment levels, Key Stage 3 results and at GCSE level)
- the opportunity to provide a broader curriculum for young people and meet different learning styles and needs
- the opportunity for more disruptive pupils to be taken out of lessons, thereby enabling teachers to focus on teaching other young people in the class
- the promotion of social inclusion through early intervention and the raising of young people's aspirations
- greater links with, and improved rapport between, young people from other schools involved in the programme in the local area
- 'spin-offs' that improved links with the sports clubs bring for other young people in the schools (e.g. opportunities to attend events at the club).

4. How is the impact achieved?

This section identifies the key features of Double Club that help achieve its positive impact. There were several inter-related aspects of the programme that contributed to this. It was important to provide a programme that was appealing to schools and to underachieving young people. The selection of young people was important, to ensure that those with the potential to benefit were selected. Once young people became involved, the programme needed to be sufficiently engaging and supportive of learning to enable them to maintain their motivation and promote their learning. The opportunity to play sport contributed to the appeal of the programme but also made a distinct contribution to its impact. The impact of Double Club is therefore achieved in four main ways:

1. The appeal of the programme.
2. Pupil selection.
3. Learning content, style and environment.
4. Playing sport.

4.1 Programme appeal

The DC programme clearly appealed to schools because it offered a means of raising standards and helping individual young people. The programme was viewed as well-considered and could be tailored to meet the needs of particular schools.

The programme also held a strong appeal for young people. Most wanted help with basic skills but also needed an alternative to normal classroom lessons. In the words of one Year 7 pupil, attending DC was '*working fun*'. The sports connection was also appealing to many, as demonstrated in the results from the ARS survey.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on motivation for attending DC:

We wanted to find out why young people had decided to go to Double Club. Young people were asked to select (from a list of five reasons) all that were true for them.

- Over half of the young people (29 out of 51) said they had decided to go because *a teacher had suggested* it to them.
- Around half (26) said they had decided to go because they *thought it would help with their literacy / numeracy*.
- 20 decided to go because they *wanted to play football/ rugby*.
- 18 had gone to Double Club because their *friends were going as well*.
- 16 had decided to go because they *liked the football / rugby club* associated with Double Club.

We asked young people if they would have still wanted to go to Double Club if it had not been about football / rugby.

- 32 out of 51 young people said they would still have wanted to go.
- 10 young people said they would not have wanted to go.
- 8 young people were unsure.

It was important to explain the programme to young people and to help them view it as a positive opportunity - a prestigious programme that it was a privilege to attend. As one DC Co-ordinator explained:

The way they are engaged in the programme, it's not done as often is the case and young people see themselves as 'I'm on this programme because I'm thick'. It's actually: 'Congratulations you are on the programme because you have the ability to do well. We think you will enjoy this and it will help you.' The way it's presented makes a significant difference to the way they perceive the programme and to their self-confidence.

4.2 Pupil selection

Several interviewees highlighted the importance of selecting pupils who would benefit from taking part in DC. This appeared to work well where DC teachers had drawn on a number of different sources of information, including assessment and attendance data as well as the views of staff in the school who knew the young people well.

Staff at one school suggested that young people who are gifted and talented at sport could benefit from involvement in DC. Overall, DC teachers and members of school staff told us that the young people who benefit most from participating in DC:

- have an interest in football (though they are not necessarily good football players)
- have levels of literacy and numeracy below the level expected for their age, or
- are coasting - *'the ones who potentially could do really well but need that intervention to give them a boost'*
- lack self-confidence
- have poor attendance.

One DC co-ordinator explained:

Our advice would be they [DC coordinators] target particular kids who need a bit of a boost. Their attendance might be starting to be a bit wobbly and they might be becoming disengaged. It's the 'four Ds' really: demotivated, disengaged, disappearing and eventually departing - if we don't do something about it.

The personalities of the young people involved and the group dynamics were also important factors to be considered, as one DC teacher explained:

You want [only] two pupils with behaviour problems in a group at the most, as it would upset the dynamic if there was more than that. Someone who would benefit the most would be someone with low levels of literacy, but not SEN... They have to have an interest in football even if they aren't good at playing it. A lot of the boys aren't good at football, although some in the group are. A lot of the boys don't have hobbies, don't have friendships and they benefit in particular from the sense of team work and working together.

The importance of 'feeling special' was reinforced by another DC teacher, who said:

There's a lot of students who do come in who are quite difficult, who at the end I think go out a lot happier and I think feel quite special because they're doing it and they've been chosen from everybody else to do it. It's sort of a privilege to do, I think.

4.3 Learning content, style and environment

The programme content, pedagogical style and the learning environment were all fundamental to its positive impact.

School staff commented on the importance of the interpersonal skills of the DC teachers: they were able to build a good rapport with the young people in their class and create an atmosphere that was more relaxed than other lessons in school. They also worked hard to encourage a 'team' identity and to help young people feel proud of their involvement in DC. This was considered especially important in encouraging young people's positive self-esteem.

The identification with football and the link with a local football club was a key feature which was particularly appreciated by some of the young people, as illustrated by the following comment:

We like football and everything, and if we like football we want to learn about and we want to write about football. It's every little boy's dream to play for their team, isn't it? So it's like doing it for our local club and we really want to get stuck in.

[Year 7 pupil]

Likewise, teachers delivering the programme described sport as 'a massive hook' for young people that 'breaks down a barrier to learning straight away'. It was also seen as a way of enabling young people to 'access information on literacy and numeracy which they wouldn't normally engage with.'

One DC teacher explained:

Some teachers have said that the lads won't do any writing in their lessons. In my lessons, seeing a picture of a footballer and asking them to write about a goal has got them writing and talking about their work. Just because it's football it gets them started. In a normal lesson they won't do it as they think: 'It's English and I'll have to do writing'.

The young people we spoke to also said how much they enjoyed using the resources and worksheets.

The English sheets were fun because they talk about Arsenal football players and how to spell their names and team work.

[Year 7 pupil]

The high quality of the resources used in the DC sessions was commented on by members of the teaching staff in all of the case study schools.

They are of a quality we couldn't begin to produce ourselves. They are in colour; they are all bang up-to-date.

[Member of teaching staff]

Having an attractive learning environment also made a big difference to young people. The classrooms were decorated with club posters, up-to-date pictures of footballers and examples of young people's work. The young people told us it marked the lessons as something different and made them feel special.

There are posters of players and it looks really bright. The atmosphere is excellent, exciting and original.

[Year 9 pupil]

The ARS survey contained several questions for young people about the work in Double Club. Their responses indicated that the work was interesting, pitched at the right level and that they worked hard.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on the work in Double Club

We asked young people whether or not they agreed with a series of statements about Double Club Lessons.

- Most of the young people (46 out of 51) agreed that the work at Double Club was *more interesting* than most school lessons.
- Most young people agreed (42 out of 51) that the work at Double Club was *easier to understand* than work in other lessons. A similar proportion (41 out of 51) agreed that the *teachers explained things more clearly* at Double Club.
- Most young people (37 out of 51) said that they *worked harder* at Double Club.

4.4 The impact of the sports sessions

The opportunity to play sport and develop sports skills made a specific contribution, especially in helping to develop a sense of teamwork amongst the young people participating in DC, enable them to make friends and gel as a group.

They have their own shirts for when they play football provided by [name of football club]. It gives them an identity and a sense of belonging.
[DC teacher]

A learning mentor spoke of the impact the opportunity to play football had had on one of the young people with whom she worked:

He's not brilliant at football, he does struggle, but the others haven't laughed at him - they've joined in and passed the ball to him. It has done him good and built his confidence up as the others involve him. It's working with others, the team work, that has helped him most.

Other benefits included enjoyment, fitness and the opportunity to receive expert coaching.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on learning sports skills

We asked young people to select, from a list of four options, what they thought was good about being able to do sport at Double Club.

- Most young people said they liked having the opportunity to *learn new sports skills* as part of the programme (38 out of 51) and enjoyed *improving their fitness* (39).
- Over half the young people (31) enjoyed *playing as a team*.
- Just under half of the young people (24) said they enjoyed *working with a good coach*.

As shown above, some young people said they were motivated to be involved in DC because of the opportunity to play sport. But not all young people were equally motivated by this aspect of the programme. For some, the sports theme of the classroom sessions was an attraction even though there was no great interest in playing the sport itself. Views were mixed as to whether DC is as effective for young people who are interested in football, but not interested in playing it. One DC teacher explained his approach to this as follows:

I have a few kids who just want to do English and not football and I say it isn't a problem. I just let them do the English and then they can go to their normal lesson.

We also found that not all young people would have been put off participating in DC if they hadn't had the opportunity to play sport.

I would still have enjoyed it because at least you are talking about football and you can learn more about the team.

[Year 7 student]

We asked all young people about the importance of the opportunity to play sport during the ARS survey.

Findings from the Audience Response Survey on the importance of playing sport

Young people were invited to select from a list of options, how they would have felt if they hadn't had the chance to play sport as part of Double Club.

- The most common response was *it wouldn't have mattered to me* (selected by 23 out of 51 young people).
- 13 young people said *they wouldn't have wanted to go*. 13 young people said they would have been *unhappy*.
- Only two young people said they would have been *happy*.

These responses indicate a divergence of views, though it is clear that the opportunity to play sport was an important aspect of 'added value' for many young people (26 out of 51 said the absence of sport would make them unhappy or that they would not have wanted to attend).

Four of the case study Double Clubs were linked to football clubs and one was associated with a rugby club. In the rugby DC, the teacher felt that the ethos, ethics and morals behind rugby could help to encourage good behaviour amongst young people. However, he also acknowledged that rugby was not as popular as football and as a result, the coaching sessions did not focus solely on rugby, but on a range of sports instead:

If I try and force rugby on them, and some of them don't like it, they're not going to get any enjoyment... so we try a range of sports to increase participation for everyone. They know that they might not like this week's sport, but next week we'll do something that they like.

The majority of young people (39 out of 51) said they enjoyed playing sports in DC regardless of whether the sport was football or rugby.

The importance of sequencing the sessions, so that the coaching immediately follows the classroom sessions was stressed by most DC teachers. DC teachers felt that having the coaching sessions follow immediately helped young people's concentration in the first lesson and provided young people with 'an instant reward'.

It's a carrot for the kids to get their work done in the classroom. It's there as an incentive...they know they can't mess around in English or they will miss the football.
[DC teacher]

Members of teaching staff in two case study areas highlighted their concerns that offering sports sessions after school could have negative consequences for DC. As one teacher said:

It would negate the whole thing. It's the balance that works so well. Some schools might run the football sessions after school, not [in] school time as there is a perception amongst staff that they shouldn't be playing football, when they should be in their lessons. It has to be how it is, as it works!

However, timetabling difficulties in some schools meant that it was not always possible to have the coaching sessions taking place immediately after the sports element. In one case study school, football sessions were scheduled after school. This was a response to reluctance amongst school staff to allow young people to miss more than two of their 'normal' lessons a week. Attendance at these after-school coaching sessions was relatively low, with only around half of the young people attending each week. The DC teacher in this school explained that the main reasons young people did not attend the sessions were that they had to attend mosque after school, and also that they had difficulties being collected from an after-school session. The DC teacher thought that the opportunity to play the sport was more of an '*initial hook*' and that the young people '*love the classes just as much*'. This point was supported by the young people themselves who told us they were more interested in the DC lessons than the opportunity to play sport, and so did not feel they were missing out if they did not attend the coaching sessions.

5. Strengths and weaknesses in particular models

We wanted to find out whether there were particular strengths and weaknesses associated with different models, but DC coordinators and teachers, members of the wider school teaching staff and young people all felt that their particular model worked well. When asked what improvements could be made to the DC programme, all interviewees felt the programme worked well in its current format.

There were strong views on both sides about the value of having DC staff based on-site. DC teachers who are based in the school feel that the main benefit to this is that they see the young people they work with around the school on a daily basis and get to know them well.

A lot of the time it takes a while for the kids to trust you, because teachers change all the time and if they see someone constant they feel more comfortable.

[DC teacher]

Having a DC teacher based in the school was also felt to provide them with a good understanding of the school environment:

Anyone who has ever worked in a school knows what a strange place it can be from the outside. Every school works differently. Being based in the school, he knows the right people to speak to and he knows the rules in the school which helps because obviously we have to be consistent with things like behaviour.

[Member of the school teaching staff]

On the other hand, interviewees from case studies where DC teachers are based outside the school also felt that there are benefits to this approach, as illustrated by the following comment.

It is someone new that the students don't know. I think the fact that [the DC teacher] is in a branded tracksuit, and is not always here in school, makes the students see him as a specialist DC teacher so there has been a bonus there. Students aren't dealing with the same member of staff day in, day out.

[Member of the school teaching staff]

A member of the school teaching staff in another area, where a DC teacher comes in to school to deliver the sessions, agreed:

The pupils see it as something new, something fresh, and something different as opposed to: 'Oh, it's one of my teachers doing this'.

Irrespective of where the DC teacher is based, there was agreement amongst our interviewees that the interpersonal skills of the teacher were paramount.

It was considered important to have teachers delivering DC sessions that young people can relate to - possible role models who had good relationships with their pupils in their previous teaching jobs. In three of the case-study clubs, both classroom and football sessions were delivered by a qualified P.E. teacher. Members of the school teaching staff in these areas felt that this worked well, as one interviewee explained:

The kids seem to engage well with the [DC teacher] ...he's a very good footballer and has the skills. The kids see him as a role model.

A member of the school teaching staff in another area agreed:

I think it good for boys to have a good role model; somebody promoting reading and writing, a P.E. teacher who is a little bit cooler than a middle-aged, female English teacher!

In another school, the classroom sessions were delivered by a qualified primary teacher. School staff did not consider the teacher's lack of secondary teaching experience to be an issue. Young people told us they enjoyed her dynamic style of teaching and also liked the fact that football sessions were delivered by a coach from the local football club.

*We enjoy it because coaches from [name of football club] come just to teach you. This is **way** better than someone else teaching us, isn't it? They wouldn't know any skills!*

[Year 7 pupil]

6. Conclusions

This study set out to evaluate the process and outcomes of the Double Club initiative. At this interim stage, the evidence from case studies of five good practice schools and Centres suggests that DC is achieving its core objectives. It is having a positive impact on pupils' motivation and self-esteem, with young people reporting that they work hard in DC sessions and that they feel more confident and able to contribute in their other lessons.

This report presents some data on attainment, which indicates that young people attending DC make good progress in basic skills. Pupils and teachers perceive the programme very positively, seeing it as an opportunity for lower-attaining young people to get additional support with their learning.

The programme is viewed as engaging, motivating, well considered and adaptable. Four key features are highlighted as particularly important: the appeal of the programme to schools and young people (especially the focus on basic skills combined with the popularity of professional sport); the selection criteria and process; the content, nature and quality of the classroom sessions; and the added value of the sports coaching sessions.

The evidence on the organisation and delivery of DC suggests that different models have been adopted in response to the needs of particular DC Centres and schools. All interviewees held positive views about the effectiveness of their own model, and they appreciated the flexibility of DC in its ability to respond to local needs.

Appendix 1

Table A1 Numbers of young people participating in DC in case-study schools

	Number of young people participating in DC in 2007/08	Year group			Length of involvement in DC
		7	8	9	
School 1	104 pupils Four cohorts of young people per term. Maximum of 15 young people per group.	✓	✓	✓	Most young people attend for one term only, but some attend for more than one term if it is thought they would benefit from further involvement.
School 2	39 pupils One cohort of young people per term. Maximum of 15 young people per group.	✓	✓		One term
School 3	11 pupils One cohort of young people.	✓			Three terms
School 4	43 pupils One cohort of young people per term. Maximum of 15 young people per group.	✓	✓	✓	One term
School 5	Approximately 60 pupils In 2007/08, one cohort of young people per term. In 2008/09, one cohort every eight weeks. Maximum of 20 young people per group.	✓	✓		2007/08: One term 2008/09: Eight weeks

Ref: DCSF-RR101

ISBN: 978 1 84775 422 6

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www.dcsf.gov.uk/research

Published by the Department for
Children, Schools and Families