



Community Planning Aberdeen

Progress Report	Project End Report: 5.4 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022
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Date of Report	26.7.22
Governance Group	CPA Board – 14 September 2022

Purpose of the Report

This report presents the results of the LOIP Improvement Project Aim to ensure 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022 and seeks approval to end the project as the aim has now been achieved.

Summary of Key Information

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant rise in the number of children, young people and families showing signs of mental and physical health fragility.
- 1.2 Physical activity has a huge potential to enhance our wellbeing. Even a short burst of 10 minutes' brisk walking increases our mental alertness, energy and positive mood. Participation in regular physical activity can increase our self-esteem and can reduce stress and anxiety. It also plays a role in preventing the development of mental health problems and in improving the quality of life of people experiencing mental health problems. ['Let's Get Physical'](#) written by the Mental Health Foundation, highlights the benefits of physical activity on wellbeing. Research has shown that physical activity releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel good – boosting your self-esteem, helping you concentrate as well as sleep, look and feel better.
- 1.3 Leading an active life can improve your feelings of self-worth and foster confidence. Taking part in a form of physical activity that you really enjoy can give you a goal to aim for and a sense of purpose. A few benefits of being physically active are:

- Less tension, stress and mental fatigue
- A natural energy boost
- Improved sleep
- A sense of achievement
- Focus in life and motivation
- Less anger and frustration
- A healthy appetite
- Better social life
- Having fun
- Detoxifying the body

1.4 Aberdeen City Council Education team have partnered with a network of professionals to develop a Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) team to review and increase opportunities for children and young people to engage in physical activity and sport. Representatives from Sport Aberdeen, Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT), Russel Anderson Development School (RADS), Grampian Disability Trust, Sport Scotland and Club Scotland were keen to support this area of development.

2 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AIM

2.1 Against this background, in February 2022, the CPA Board approved the [project charter](#) for the initiation of an improvement project which aimed to ensure 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022.

3 WHAT CHANGES DID WE MAKE?

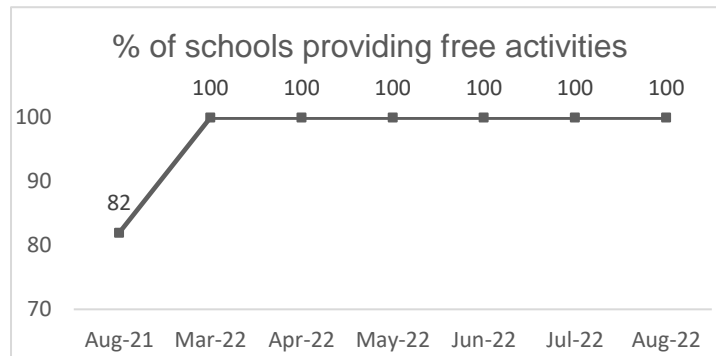
3.1 A partnership was developed and has grown in strength and with monthly Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) meetings being facilitated by Quality Improvement Manager, Gael Simpson and Graeme Dale, Head of Active Schools and Communities. An agreed set of aims was established and ensures clear focus on improvement. The PEPAS Group takes a lead role, advocates and advises on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport on a city-wide basis. The group aims include;

- Assessing City Wide CLPL Training Needs
- Developing / advising on city wide CLPL Programme
- Developing and supporting priority areas for the city across PEPAS, such as positive mental health and outdoor activity
- Utilising city-wide Data to inform decisions, including full engagement with all stakeholders
- Inputting into discussions on future PE Delivery / Staffing Structure in Aberdeen (linking PE delivery across Primary and Secondary)
- Developing and supporting stronger links between PE and community sport
- Engaging with partner organisations / National Governing Bodies to further the PEPAS agenda
- Submitting funding applications for projects etc. on a city-wide basis
- Considering appropriate use of facilities for physical activity

- 3.2 An agreed standard set of data measures has been agreed and all partners will launch this from the beginning of the next academic session to ensure clear and robust data is available for supporting our collective understanding of the impact of interventions and supports required moving forward.
- 3.3 Partners have worked closely together to signpost to and increase advertisement of physical activity opportunities through the Education newsletter which is shared with all parents and carers of children and young people who attend Aberdeen city Early Learning and Childcare or School settings. Through this approach celebrations of success have also been recognised. Examples of this can be found below.
[February Newsletter](#)
[March Newsletter](#)
- 3.4 Collaborative approaches to delivery and identification of professional learning which supports physical activity, physical education or sport has also been increased through wider signposting and sharing of information.
- 3.5 Through the PEPAS discussions and looking to that there were a range of physical activities/times available to children and young people, Sport Aberdeen now offer free extra-curricular activity to all learners across Aberdeen City. This is reliant on volunteers and well-planned activities led by Active Schools Coordinators and a requirement that aligns with Sport Scotland funding.
- 3.6 There are a number of areas that have been developed this year, due to launch in August 2022, namely:
- .1 The PEPAS group have developed a Physical Education (PE) progression to support consistent understanding of PE skills and as part of this signpost to learning plans, resources to support delivery and training will be offered session 2022-23 to support the launch of this.
 - .2 The development of a PEPAS website has been completed and is due to be launched at the beginning of the academic session, supporting signposting, expectations, partnership working and celebrations of success relating to physical activity.

4 HAVE OUR CHANGES RESULTED IN IMPROVEMENT?

- 4.1 Our changes have resulted in improvement with the aim being achieved with all children and young people having access to free physical activity through with all schools across the city now providing free access to physical activity. The percentage of schools offering free physical activities increasing from 82% to 100% between August 2021 and March 2022. This improvement has been sustained since March 2022 and has remained at 100%.



4.2 Following the covid recovery grant with a focus on wellbeing, all schools now have Active Schools Assistants one day per week increasing physical activity throughout break and lunch times, to work with staff, increasing confidence of engagement in physical activity and supporting targeted groups of children, using physical activity to improve outcomes, including mental health and wellbeing.

4.3 The new extra curricular programme has as of June 2022:

- 180 clubs city wide involved
- Over 250 volunteers delivering the activities
- Over 2,500 children participating



4.4 The voice and involvement of all children and young people regardless of their background or circumstances is at the core of the development of activities and to ensure and promote inclusivity Active Schools Coordinators:

- supported the continued recruitment to the Active Girls Committee, which now has 8 secondary schools representations and
- supported 45 young people through the SPACE (Supporting Physical Activity For Care Experienced) programme this session.



- 4.5 The PEPAS group have met regularly to address and ensure solution focused approaches are used to increase access to free physical activity with a focus on improving delivery within schools, access to professional learning for staff to increase confidence, signposting to events on offer across partners and considering approaches to target support for increasing physical activity and sport at break and lunch times within the school day.

5 HOW WILL WE SUSTAIN THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

- 5.1 The PEPAS group have a well-established group at senior leadership level within various partner agencies who have an agreed aim and drive for improving outcomes relating to physical education, physical activity and sport.
- 5.2 Recruitment of an Education Support Officer with a clear focus on physical wellbeing will continue to maintain focus on this area within the education setting.
- 5.3 There are a number of areas that have been developed this year, due to launch in August 2022, detailed in section 3 of the report, and will support the drive and focus on physical and mental wellbeing. We will continue as a group to review these areas and develop them, based on the agreed data sets that partners will be capturing as we move forward.
- 5.4 There are a number of key agenda items that we will focus on during academic session 2022-23 and a key priority will be the use of creative approaches and accessible resources in parks and local areas within Aberdeen to enhance the use of the space and features within these areas to increase free physical activity opportunities.

6 HOW WILL WE MONITOR THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

- 6.1 These improvements can be monitored through the PEPAS website which will be a space for sharing successes and highlighting improvement in this area.
- 6.2 Should it be agreed that the project is ended, the overall aim data recorded will continue to be monitored and reported to the Children's Services Board, as well as added to the Outcomes Framework/Improvement Programme Dashboard to ensure that performance continues.

7 OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCALE UP AND SPREAD

- 7.1 We have recognised that close partnership working with key partners is essential in us meeting the physical wellbeing needs of children and young people. There is collective recognition that if we work collaboratively, the offer of supports can be more effective, timely and provide earlier intervention and prevention. To ensure the supports provided are sustained, at the heart of this is the strength of relational approaches, building confidence in the systems of support and removal of barriers and lengthy timescales for response, being open to new ideas and listening to what children and young people need and want.

Recommendations for Action

It is recommended that the Board

- i) Agree that testing is concluded and that this Improvement Project is brought to an end on the basis that the project aim has been achieved and the changes tested will continue with business as usual;
- ii) Note that the dataset for the overall aim will continue to be reported via the Improvement Programme dashboard to ensure progress is monitored; and
- iii) Note that in order to sustain the improvement a number of areas detailed in section 3 of the report, that have been developed this year, are due to launch in August 2022 and will be monitored by the PEPAS Group.

Opportunities and Risks

Opportunities: -

- Better communication in partnership working
- Learning opportunities across multiagency
- Working collaboratively means the offer of supports can be more effective, timely and provide earlier intervention and prevention. To ensure the supports provided are sustained, at the heart of this is the strength of relational approaches, building confidence in the systems of support and removal of barriers and lengthy timescales for response, being open to new ideas and listening to what children and young people need and want.

Risks: -

- Continuity of staff in schools and partner providers

Consultation

Children's Services Board
CPA Management Group – 17 August 2022

Background Papers

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report.

[Final-Draft-LOIP-Refresh-21.pdf \(communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk\)](#)
[Charter-5.4-Free-Access-to-Physical-Activity.pdf \(communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk\)](#)

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