

# Evaluation of CashBack CashBack Schools of Football and Volunteer and Inspire Programmes 2022-23 (Year 3)

A Report for the Scottish Football Association



*Social Research*

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*Service Design & Innovation*

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*Strategy & Collaboration*

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*Evaluation Support*

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*Social Impact Measurement*

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June 2023



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# 1. Introduction

This section introduces the CashBack for Communities programme, the Scottish FA's CashBack programme 2020-23 and provides an overview of the research.

## The Scottish Football Association (Scottish FA)

The Scottish Football Association (Scottish FA) is the governing body for football in Scotland. Established in 1873, it supports and promotes the development of all levels of the game in Scotland.

The Scottish FA's vision is **'to lead the national game with integrity and innovation to breed a culture of performance, unity and trust'**, and this is underpinned by the following values:

- **We Lead With Purpose** - We are committed to the principles of development and fair play and expect everyone in the Game to do the same.
- **We focus on the goal** - We are ambitious and we do all that we can to fulfil ours and the game's potential.
- **We respect each other** - We respect each other and the football family overall. Diversity brings success.
- **We share and connect** - We promote and cultivate a positive and inclusive team ethic both internally and externally. Togetherness is our strength.

## Social Value Lab

Social Value Lab is the national hub for social impact research, strategy, and evaluation. Our mission is to produce the evidence and ideas that support stronger, more effective projects, programmes and communities in Scotland.

## CashBack for Communities

CashBack for Communities, established in 2008, is a Scottish Government initiative that takes money seized from criminals under the proceeds of crime legislation and invests them in programmes and services for young people.

The Scottish FA has been a CashBack for Communities delivery partner since its inception in 2008.

The programme is currently in Phase 5 and has committed £110 million to community initiatives since 2008. For Phase 5 £19 million has been distributed through 24 organisations to improve the quality of life of young people across Scotland.

In Phase 5 there are six mandatory outcomes that projects must support delivery of:

- Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk-taking behaviour
- Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills
- Outcome 3: Young people's health and wellbeing improves
- Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (Positive Destinations)
- Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to society
- Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system

## Scottish FA CashBack for Communities Programme

The two components<sup>1</sup> of the Scottish FA CashBack programme are My School of Football and My Volunteer and Inspire Programme.

**My School of Football** is delivered in 14 schools in areas of multiple deprivation across Scotland to pupils in S1 and S2. Sessions form part of their curriculum learning, and pupils develop personal as well as physical skills.

The programme incorporates transferable skills such as teamwork, leadership, and responsibility alongside developing young people's technical skills in football. The programme aims to increase the attendance and attainment of participants, support their transition to

been scaled back or shelved – notably the 'Club Engagement' activities for schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Due in part to Covid-19 restrictions in Year 1 of the programme, other components originally planned have

secondary school, and provide the groundwork for success in their final years of school and beyond.

Some schools build themed workshops into the programme, covering topics such as mental and physical health, nutrition, and social issues such as tackling sectarianism in football. Some schools provide opportunities for participants on the programme to take part in volunteering in their community, though opportunities for this have been limited during the delivery of Phase 5, due to Covid-19 restrictions.

My School of Football programme fosters relationships between schools and local football clubs through the Scottish FA. In some schools, the sessions are delivered by coaches from the local club, and some sessions take place on club grounds (as opposed to school football pitches).

**My Volunteer and Inspire Programme** provides a tailored pathway of development for young people aged between 16-24 with an interest in pursuing a career in the game. Participants develop employability skills through volunteering events, and have the opportunity to gain formal qualifications in areas such as coaching, refereeing, event management and physiotherapy.

Participants gain experience assisting professional coaches in the delivery of football sessions, running summer camps for children and young people, and taking part in national football club match days. The delivery staff support young people with employability skills such as giving presentations, improving written and verbal communication, and building CVs and portfolios to help with job or university applications.

### My Football Community

The Scottish FA also run several other programmes through CashBack which, alongside Schools of Football, are collectively referred to as 'My Football Community':

- 
- **Club Engagement** – school pupils are offered free places on a Scottish FA 'Introduction to Coaching Course', and provided opportunities to volunteer with a local club
- 
- **Club Diversity** – a football outreach programme delivered by community clubs. Young people aged 16 and over who are at risk of taking part in anti-social behaviour are provided free opportunities to take part in football related activities in the evening.
- 
- **Go Fitba** – a football-based health and wellbeing programme, delivered during school holidays
- 

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these programmes were significantly disrupted in Year 1 and 2. However, data for these programmes has been collected in Year 3 and where possible, these figures have been included in this year's reporting.

### Research methodology

As this evaluation was due to take place in the final year of this Phase of CashBack funding, the Scottish FA and Social Value Lab held discussions about how the evaluation activities planned for Year 3 might be amended to enhance understanding of the programme and inform its future development.

It was also felt by both the Scottish FA and Social Value Lab that, given that the VIP project has been largely unchanged in the years covering this phase and the previous phase of CashBack, there has been ample evidence gathered from interviews with participants. Another round of interviews with young people was unlikely to add value to what is already known.

So, in lieu of interviews with VIP participants, this year's evaluation includes a case study exploring the impact of School of Football in schools where the programme has developed beyond what is delivered through CashBack alone. In these schools, School of Football often continues past S2 (either funded by the school itself or through other sources) and is delivered in a way that is more reflective of the Scottish FA's current thinking on the future of the programme and its *Learning Through Football* platform – typically with closer ties between schools and local clubs and a focus on football/clubs as an opportunity for learning alternative to the ordinary curriculum.

The research for this evaluation was carried out by Social Value Lab between February and May 2023. We used a mixed methods research design:

### My School of Football

- 
- Self-evaluation survey: an online survey of all young people in the programme – 239 responses (33% response rate).
- 
- Parent and carer survey: an online survey for the parents and carers of young people on the programme – 164 parents and carers completed the survey.
- 
- School stakeholder survey: an online survey for school staff and partners involved in the delivery of the programme – 18 people representing 10 schools responded.
- 
- Individual interviews with young people: semi-structured interviews with 9 young people representing 4 schools.

- 
- Focus groups with young people: 7 focus groups with 34 participants, representing 4 schools.
- 
- Interviews with school staff: 4 interviews with Heads of Departments and Head/Deputy Head teachers representing 4 schools.
- 
- Interviews with delivery staff: interviews with 4 club coaches
- 

### **My Volunteer and Inspire Programme**

- 
- Self-evaluation survey: online survey for all VIP participants – 56 responses (48% response rate).
- 

### **Learning Through Football**

- 
- Individual interviews with young people: semi-structured interviews with 6 young people representing 2 schools.
- 
- Interviews with school staff: 2 interviews with Heads of P.E. Department in 2 schools.
- 
- Interviews with delivery staff: interviews with 2 club coaches.
- 

Section 2 of the report summarises the programme's overall performance against the CashBack logic model targets. The remainder of the report focuses on the programme's impact in Year 3.

## 2. Performance in Cashback Phase 5 Overall

	Target (Phase 5 overall)		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total number of YP in Phase 5 to date	Performance against target (+ / - / =)
	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP		
<b>Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour</b>										
Young people report their confidence increasing	75%	2,475	92%	656	98%	750	96%	2,403	3,809	+
Young people feel able to do new things	75%	2,700	99%	945	100%	934	100%	2,619	4,507	+
Young people feel more resilient	75%	2,475	99%	707	100%	767	100%	2,503	3,977	+
Other stakeholders report perceived increases of confidence and resilience	70%	N/a	†	-	92%	-	98%	-	95%	+
Young people report positive, supportive networks	75%	2,700	98%	945	99%	927	98%	2,606	4,479	+
Young people report positive changes in their behaviour	75%	2,475	100%	710	100%	767	100%	2,503	3,980	+
Other stakeholders report perceived positive changes in the behaviour of young participants	70%	N/a	†	-	68%	-	82%	-	75%	+
<b>Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills</b>										
Young people gain accreditation for learning and skills development	80%	288	100%	252	100%	167	100%	116	535	+
Young people report their skills are increasing	75%	2,700	99%	958	100%	934	100%	2,619	4,511	+
Other stakeholders report skills are increasing	75%	-	†	-	64%	-	98%	-	96%	+

	Target (Phase 5 overall)		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total number of YP in Phase 5 to date	Performance against target (+ / - / =)
	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP		
<b>Outcome 3: Young people's health and well-being improves</b>										
Young people report increases in feelings against SHANARRI indicators	75%	2,700	100%	964	100%	934	100%	2,619	4,517	+
Other stakeholders report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators among young people	70%	-	†	-	89%	-	98%	-	94%	+

<b>Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)</b>										
Young people achieve positive destination	70%	252	100%	252	100%	167	100%	635	1,054	+
Young people improve attendance*	70%	910	96%	315	96%	532	95%	529	1,375	+
Young people's attainment improves*	70%	910	96%	389	96%	562	97%	554	1,506	+

<b>Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities</b>										
Number of participants going on to volunteer, coach, mentor, support or take a leadership role in community organisations	80%	288	100%	252	100%	167	100%	635	1,054	+
Number of hours of volunteering contributed by participants	288		2,352		2,565		3,175		8,092	+
Number of community focused awards gained by participants	70%	252			100%	167	100%	635	802	+
Other stakeholders perceive that young people's contribution, links and social interaction are improving	70%	-	†	-	54%	-	84%	-	70%	=
Participants' perception of their neighbourhood improves	60%	2160	84%	807	83%	780	89%	2,347	3,934	+

	Target (Phase 5 overall)		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Total number of YP in Phase 5 to date	Performance against target (+ / - / =)
	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP	%	YP		
Participants have a heightened sense of belonging to a community	60%	2,160	83%	786	87%	810	89%	2,366	3,961	+
Participants have increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community	70%	252	88%	222	86%	143	92%	107	472	+
Young people feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving	70%	252	97%	245	97%	162	100%	116	523	+

**Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system**

Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour*	70%	700	†	†	99%	605	96%	1,871	2,477	+
Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	70%	700	†	†	98%	570	96%	1,731	2,301	+
Stakeholders reporting that participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	70%	-	†	-	70%	70%	65%	-	68%	-

† No data captured in Year 1

\* Excluding those who said this was not an issue before

More detailed figures, including a full breakdown per programme, is included as an appendix.



# 3. School of Football: Year 3 Impact

This section describes the impact of the School of Football programme on the young people who participated. Data in this section has been collected from interviews, focus groups and surveys completed by young people, parents and carers, teachers, and programme delivery staff.

## Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour

### Young People

Most young people (96%) young people reported that their confidence had increased.

**Fig 3.1: Young people report their confidence increasing**

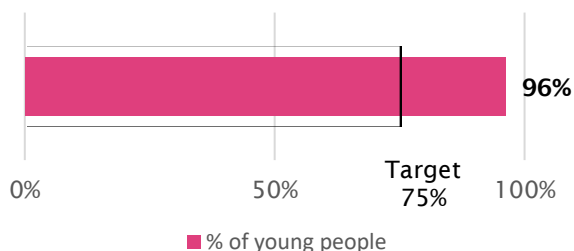
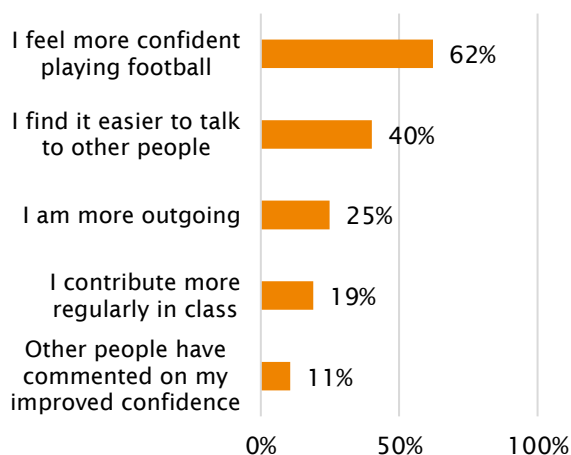


Figure 3.2 indicates the ways in which young people had seen a positive difference in their own confidence. Most commonly young people saw an improvement in their confidence on the pitch, though a significant number had found new confidence in social situations and in their ability to contribute in class.

**Fig. 3.2: Confidence - % of young people responding positively**



In interviews, young people spoke about the ways in which they had improved their confidence as players, or how they could see this improvement in the way

they play. Participants reflected that they had become more vocal on the pitch – talking to teammates more, asking for the ball, giving instructions, and taking a leadership role. Young people talked about how testing themselves against better players or achieving things on the pitch they didn't know they were capable of had helped to improve their confidence.

Many had been able to transfer this new confidence off the pitch, enabling them to become less intimidated by new situations or speaking to new people. For some, being in School of Football had been key in bringing them out of their shell, in many cases easing the transition from primary to secondary school.

Young people described how the atmosphere created in School of Football had been a key element in building their confidence. Lots of positive reinforcement from coaches and a pressure-free setting had allowed many participants to flourish.

*"I'm more confident going in for the ball."*

*"The coaches give you encouragement which helps you to build your confidence."*

*"There's not a lot of pressure on you - you can let loose and try new things."*

*"When I joined, I got pure confident playing football."*

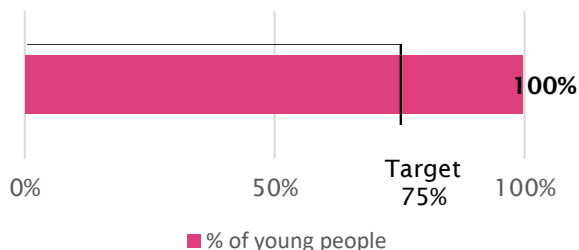
*"When I first came to school, I was really shy. When I started School of Football, I got my skills up and now I feel more confident and it's easier to talk to people."*

*"I see I'm a lot more confident in talking to my teammates."*

*Young people*

All young people feel better able to try new things as a result of School of Football.

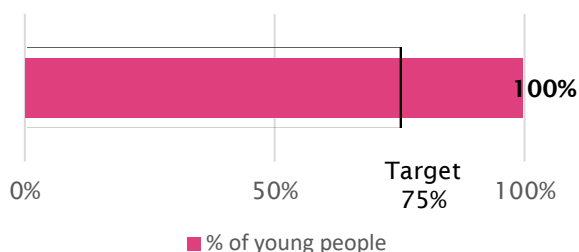
**Fig 3.3: Young people feel able to do new things**



In interviews young people talked about how being involved in School of Football had opened their eyes to the possibility of joining other extra-curricular clubs, particularly when they hadn't done much sport in the past. Some had already sought other opportunities to use their new football skills, like joining the school team or a local club, while others said that they would be more likely to seek out new things since doing School of Football.

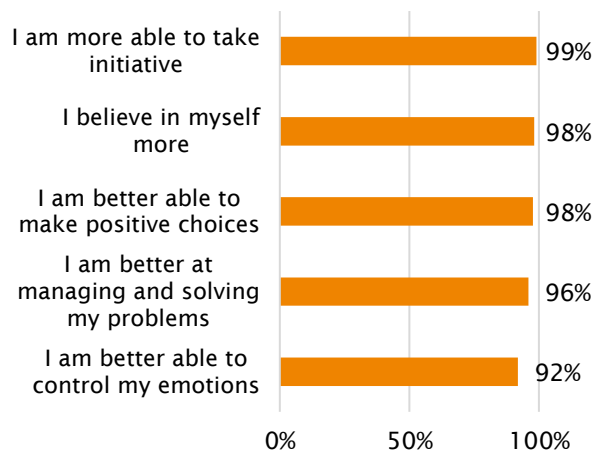
Increases in resilience were reported by all young people.

**Fig 3.4: Young people feel more resilient**



As Fig. 3.5 indicates, most young people experienced improved resilience across a range of areas, including taking initiative, self-belief, making better decisions and self-regulation.

**Fig. 3.5: Resilience - % of young people responding positively**



Perseverance, learning from mistakes, working hard, taking on new challenges, and dealing better with negative emotions were common themes in discussions with young people.

Participants spoke about having learned how to deal with setbacks in a more positive way, developing a different mindset towards failure, coping with anger better, overcoming fear and the benefits of applying themselves – all lessons gained from being part of School of Football.

Young people valued the encouragement and advice they had received from coaches around how to keep going in the face of difficulties and learn from their mistakes.

*"They help you when you do something wrong - they help you and then you can practice."*

*"If you lose, you go back next week and try again."*

*"Competition spurs you on to do better."*

*"If you lose a game, you know you'll have School of Football again soon and can do better next time."*

*"Not everything's gonna go your way. I learned to look at it differently - like, at least we achieved this."*

*"I've learned if you're getting beat, just get on with it."*

*"You just have to get in there."*

*"It taught me never to give up."*

*Young people*

All young people reported improved support networks as a result of taking part in the programme.

**Fig 3.6: Young people report positive, supportive networks**

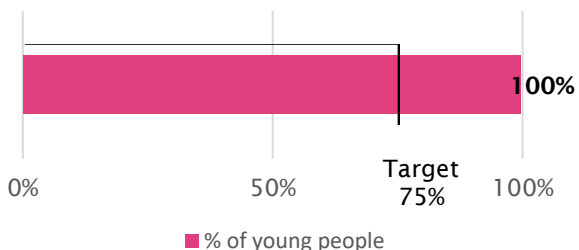
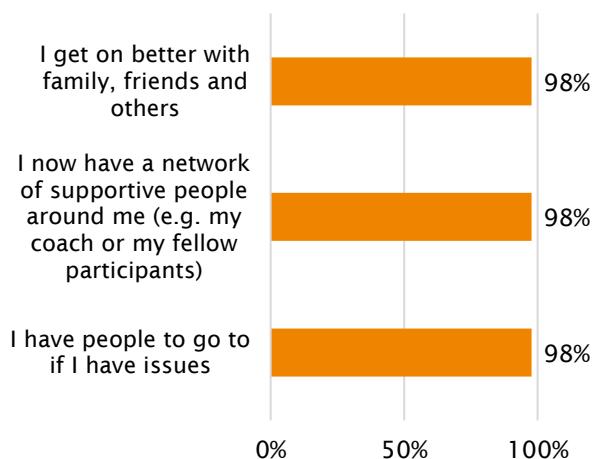


Figure 3.7. demonstrates the ways in which young people reported their support networks had improved.

**Fig. 3.7: Support networks - % of young people responding positively**



Young people have been able to grow their support network with new friends they have made through School of Football. Interviews with young people revealed that many had developed new friendships – often with people from different backgrounds – or strengthened existing relationships as a result of being brought together regularly through the programme. Young people also described the sense of togetherness or camaraderie that comes from having the shared focus of something like School of Football.

Also clear from interviews were the positive relationships young people have developed with School of Football coaches. Coaches were generally seen as a friendly, familiar faces round the school with whom young people could talk about anything that might be bothering them. Participants appreciated the interest taken in them by coaches and the concern for their wellbeing they had demonstrated. Young people also spoke positively about the respect shown to them by coaches and how this relationship often differed from a traditional teacher/pupil relationship to the point that they felt more like peers.

*"It's helped my friendships to get stronger."*

*"You're playing together so you learn to trust each other."*

*"I made a friend through School of Football and now we walk home together every day."*

*"Knowing the team is there to support you helps keep you going."*

*"I've made a lot more friends. People from other primary schools and people who aren't in my other classes."*

*"Every morning they ask you how you are. Other teachers don't do that."*

*"They boost you up and give you motivation."*

*"[the coach] always asks us about things."*

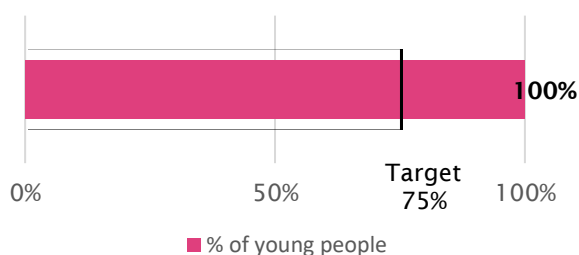
*"We talk to [the coach] all the time."*

*"The coaches are so friendly and approachable."*

Young people

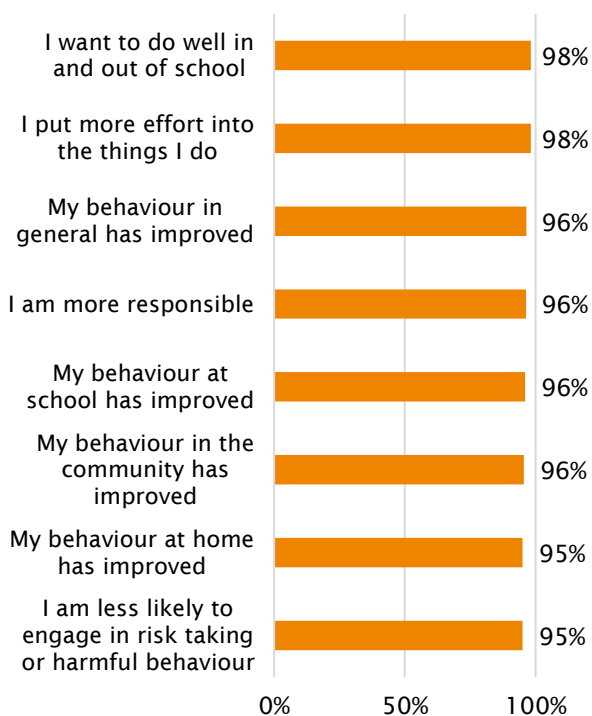
All young people reported positive changes in their behaviour.

**Fig 3.8: Young people report positive changes in their behaviour**



Positive impacts on behaviour were reported in a variety of ways, with most young people noting improvements across multiple areas (see Fig. 3.9).

**Fig. 3.9: Behaviour - % of young people responding positively**



In interviews young people spoke about the expectations to maintain their behaviour placed on them by the programme. In some cases there was a recognised code of conduct to which young people had to adhere, while in others standards of behaviour are set out more informally during sessions. Whatever the arrangements, these expectations for behaviour proved an incentive for many young people who reflected more on their actions and attitude for fear of missing out – not only during School of football but in the wider school environment.

Sessions were also instructive for many young people to learn about and develop positive behaviour traits. Participants spoke about becoming more responsible (e.g. remembering kit, being on time, not letting the team down), showing respect (to teammates, coaches, referees, teachers), maximising effort, and channelling negative emotions (e.g. getting anger out on the pitch, instead of it coming out in other ways).

In some schools, specific workshops on discrimination and racism had been eye-opening for young people and encouraged them to think more about how they were treating other people.

*“If you don't behave, you don't get to take part.”*

*“Your behaviour improves because you want to stay in School of Football.”*

*“I try to act up less because I want to stay in School of Football.”*

*“If people are getting annoyed and shouting at each other, they pull us in and talk about showing respect.”*

*“If you haven't got a good attitude, you're not going to play well.”*

*“Whenever I have a football at my feet, I feel calmer. I can get my anger out in a good way.”*

*“I learned that shouting at someone isn't going to change their mind.”*

*“If I've got football I'm not going to forget things - it reminds me what I've got for the rest of the day.”*

Young people

**Other Stakeholders:**

Most parents/carers and school stakeholders (98%) reported increased confidence and resilience in young people as a result of taking part in the programme.

**Fig 3.10: Other stakeholders report perceived increases of confidence and resilience**

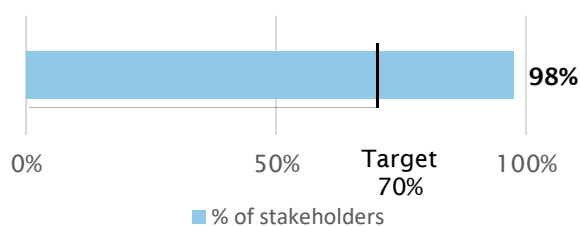
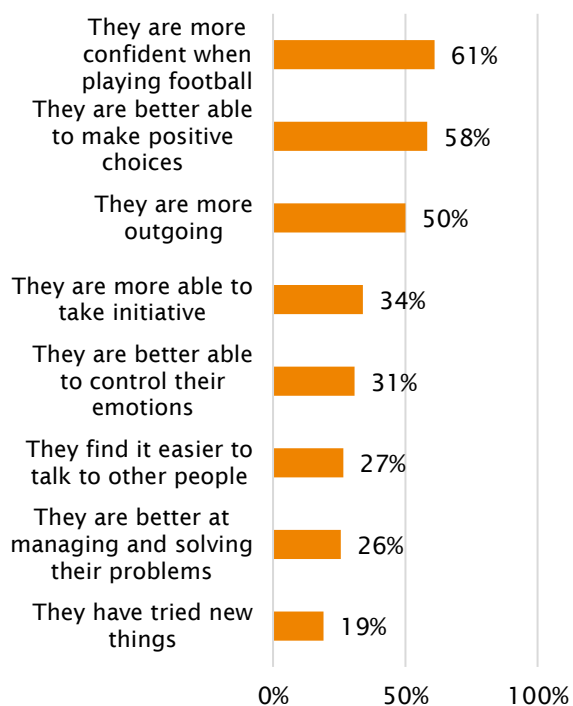


Figure 3.11 demonstrates the ways in which other stakeholders felt that young people had improved their confidence or resilience. A majority perceived an increase in confidence on the football pitch and in young people's ability to make positive choices. A smaller, though significant, number of stakeholders reported that this confidence/resilience had transferred off the pitch in other ways as well.

**Fig 3.11: Other stakeholders report perceived increases of confidence and resilience**



*"You can see the shy ones take a leadership role on the pitch."*

Coach

*"It's making up for a lot of the social development pupils have missed out on because of covid."*

*"Being able to consistently see the groups across the school week has allowed the S1 group especially to fit in with transitioning to secondary. This is obviously a big step for any pupil and the programme has helped them lean on each other and make friends easier with that common interest of football."*

Teachers

*"He seems more confident and made new friends."*

*"My child has become more confident in himself and loves school of football."*

*"She has always been fit and active, however this has developed her confidence and self belief even further in sport."*

Parents

More than four-fifths of stakeholders (82%) observed a positive change in the behaviour of young people resulting from their participation in School of Football.

**Fig 3.12: Other stakeholders report perceived positive changes in the behaviour of young participants**

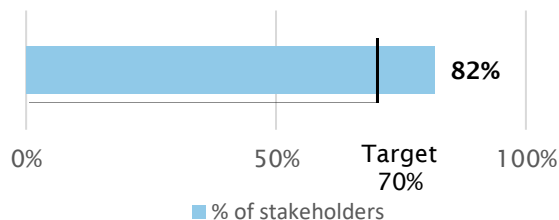
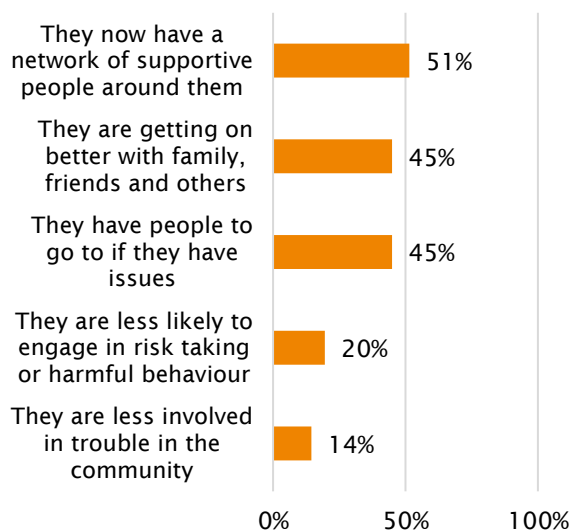


Figure 3.1.13 shows the reasons why stakeholders felt that young people's behaviour had improved a result of the programme.

**Fig 3.13: Other stakeholders report perceived positive changes in the behaviour of young participants**



*"You see an improvement in lots of their personalities."*

*"They start to learn [to improve their behaviour] from the downside of missing out."*

*"They understand the effects of negative behaviour and how it can affect them."*

Teachers/coaches

*"The programme has helped to keep my daughter engaged in school as she has learned that to be able to be part of the team, she needs to maintain a standard with*

her work and behaviour throughout the school."

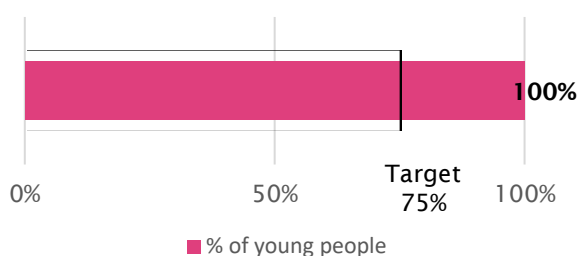
Parent

**Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills**

**Young People**

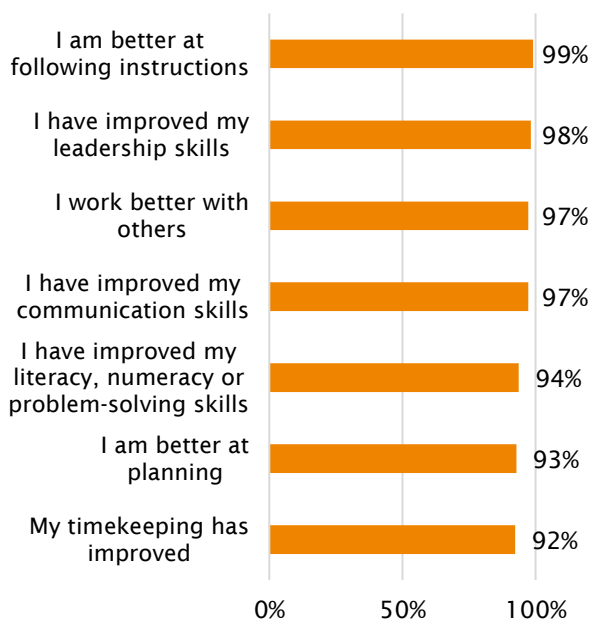
All young people reported increased skills as a result of taking part in School of Football.

**Fig 3.14: Young people report their skills are increasing**



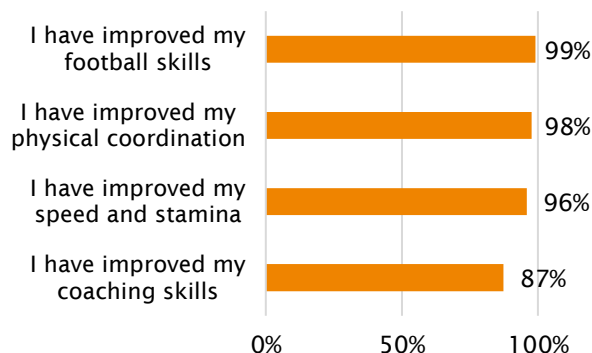
Young people reported a range of improved personal skills, with most seeing positive changes across multiple areas (see Fig. 3.5.).

**Fig. 3.15: Skills - % of young people responding positively**



In addition to personal skills, School of Football has also given young people a platform to develop a variety of physical skills, as shown in figure 3.16.

**Fig. 3.16: Physical skills - % of young people responding positively**



Most commonly in interviews, young people spoke about improvements to their performance on the pitch, particularly those who hadn't played much football before taking part in the programme. Better communication was another common theme, with young people mentioning how they now expressed ideas more clearly, gave more encouragement to others and were better at listening. Learning and playing in a group setting and taking on a captain's role had also allowed young people to improve their teamworking and leadership skills.

Young people also frequently talked about how the environment provided by School of football had been conducive to building their skills – they had the chance to identify the skills they were lacking, focus on things they wanted to improve, and practice them in a stress-free environment. Regular encouragement from coaches also gave young people motivation to improve.

*"Having the coaches focus on one skill and work on it for the week helps you get better."*

*"If they spot something you're not good at, they'll help you get better."*

*"I used to demand, rather than asking people."*

*"You take these skills with you."*

*"Every time we play a new skill pops out and you're like 'What? I did that?'"*

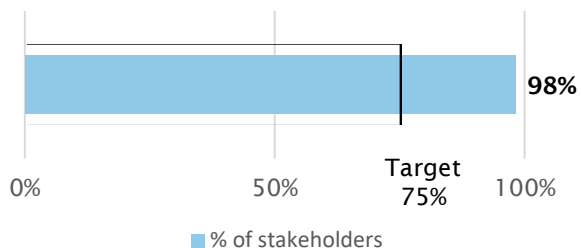
*"You learn stuff and you get to have fun at the same time."*

Young people

**Other Stakeholders**

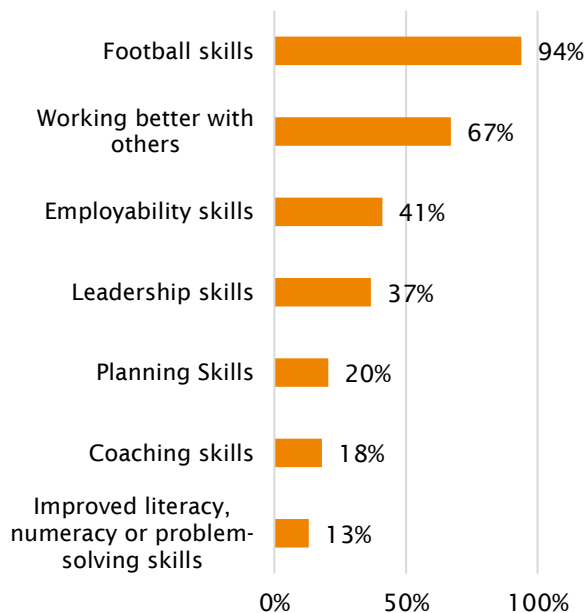
Almost all (98%) parents/carers and school stakeholders reported that young people had learnt new skills through School of Football.

**Fig 3.17: Other stakeholders report skills are increasing**



While an improvement in football skills was most commonly observed by stakeholders, a significant number also witnessed improvements in other skills, including teamworking, leadership and employability (timekeeping, following instructions, etc.) – see Fig. 3.18.

**Fig. 3.18: Skills - % of stakeholders responding positively**



*"You can see the progression."*

*"A lot of kids want to learn but just need the right opportunity."*

*"It has vastly improved the opportunities of young people who have taken part in the programme. We have had young people go on to become coaches as well as to University to study to become PE teachers."*

*"They develop at their own pace and without fear of failure."*

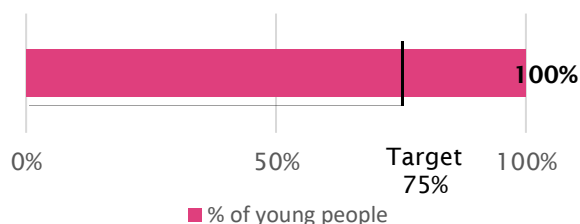
Teachers/coaches

**Outcome 3: Young people's health and well-being improves**

**Young People**

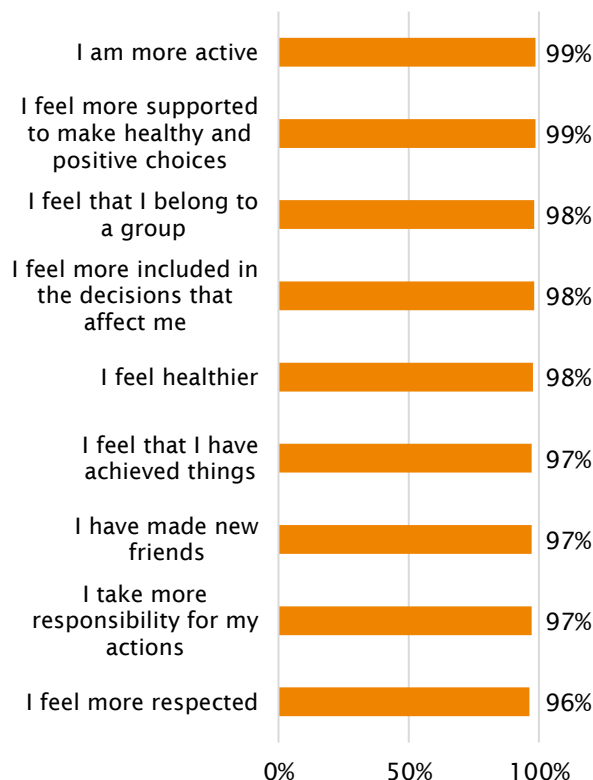
All young people reported improved increased wellbeing as a result of taking part in the programme.

**Fig 3.19: Young people report increases in feelings against SHANARRI indicators**



Most young people felt that their wellbeing had improved across a range of SHANARRI indicators (see Fig 3.20).

**Fig. 3.20: Wellbeing - % of young people responding positively**



In interviews, young people explained how being part of School of Football had allowed them to improve their fitness, giving them more opportunities to exercise and build stamina, strength or speed.

Young people gained a sense of achievement from doing well in School of Football. This could be informally, through playing well, winning games, or mastering a new skill, or through more formal recognition such as awards or announcements linked to the programme (e.g. most improved player, best goal, best effort).

Young people also expressed feeling included because they were part of the programme, as not everyone got to take part, and there was often a perceived prestige attached to being in School of Football.

*"If you do really well in a game your teammates will always say well done."*

*"When you score your first goal it gives you so much motivation to be happy and play well. And the same when you're playing well as a team."*

*"School of Football does help to keep you healthy, especially if you don't have any other clubs."*

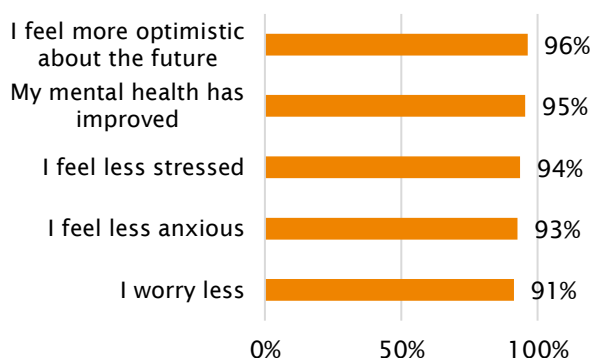
*"It gets your energy levels up."*

*"I just feel good that I've been picked because some people haven't. So you feel like there's a reason you got picked."*

Young people

Young people were also specifically asked about the impact of the programme on their mental health. Most reported a positive effect on feelings of optimism, stress and anxiety levels and mental health in general (see Fig 3.21).

**Fig. 3.21: Mental health - % of young people responding positively**



Young people talked about how School of Football provided a useful distraction from anything that might be troubling them or a positive focus at times of stress. More generally, young people discussed feeling happier when they played football or an improvement in their mood as a result of knowing they had a session coming up. Young people reported carrying

the positive mood gained from enjoying a School of Football session into their other classes.

*"If I'm annoyed or frustrated it really helps."*

*"It makes me feel good when I have School of Football because I love football."*

*"When you get into the game you just forget about everything else."*

*"If you're stressed out in a class, going out and playing football with your friends just helps."*

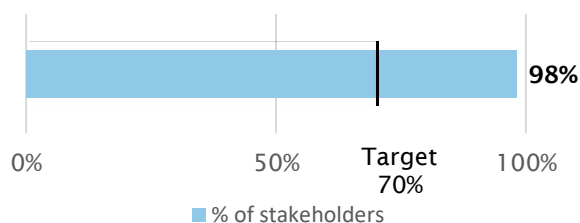
*"It distracts you from it all."*

Young people

**Other Stakeholders**

Most other stakeholders (98%) reported that taking part in School of Football had a positive impact on the wellbeing of young people.

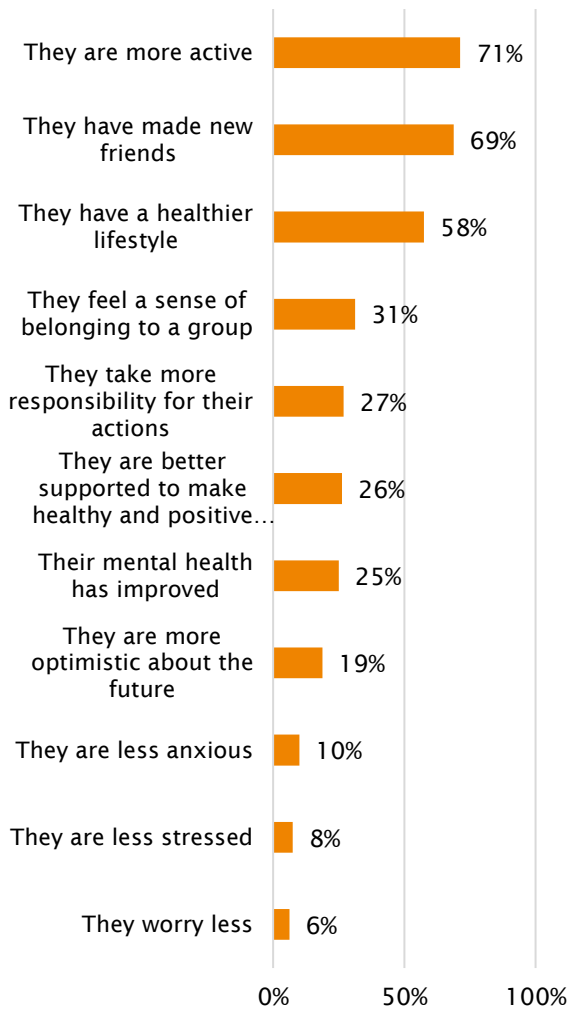
**Fig 3.22: Other stakeholders report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators among young people**



More active/healthy lifestyles and positive social impacts were most commonly reported by stakeholders, though there were improvements observed across all wellbeing indicators (see Figure 3.23).



**Fig. 3.23: Wellbeing - % of stakeholders responding positively**



*"My son is dyslexic, so this is the area he succeeds when at school."*

*"I believe It has made a huge positive difference to the mental wellbeing of my child."*

Parents/carers

*"It has created supportive friendship groups and relationships with trustworthy adults who they are able to seek support and guidance from."*

*"It's provided them the opportunity to be themselves, in an environment where they are not judged."*

*"You can really see pupils develop as people."*

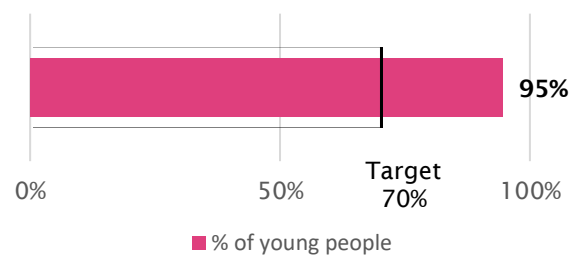
Teachers

**Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)**

**Young People**

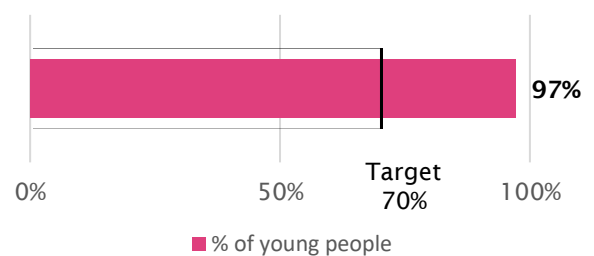
In surveys, 76% of young people reported that they had previously had issues around their attendance at school. Of this group, 95% said that the programme had helped them to improve this.

**Fig 3.24: Young people report improved attendance**



Similarly, for attainment, excluding the 21% of young people who said it wasn't an issue before, School of Football helped almost all participants (97%) to make improvements.

**Fig 3.25: Young people report improved attainment**



Most commonly in interviews young people spoke about finding it easier to come to school or get through the day with the knowledge that they had School of Football to look forward to.

For some young people, the better mood resulting from taking part in School of Football sessions carried over into their next classes, making them better able to participate and learn.

A few reflected that being part of School of football had given them a more positive perspective on school and/or encouraged them to do better in their classes.

*"It's good to have something to break up the day."*

*"If you do well in School of Football, you go into the next class feeling really good."*

*"It's made me work a lot harder in football and in other classes."*

*"Sometimes you don't want to come to school but School of Football makes it easier."*

*"It's definitely better than sitting in a classroom - something to look forward to on a Monday."*

*"It's good for making people think about school differently - it doesn't have to be just sitting in a classroom."*

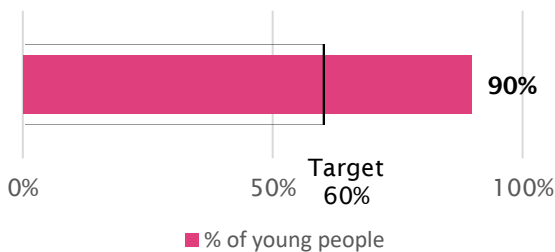
Young people

### Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities

#### Young People

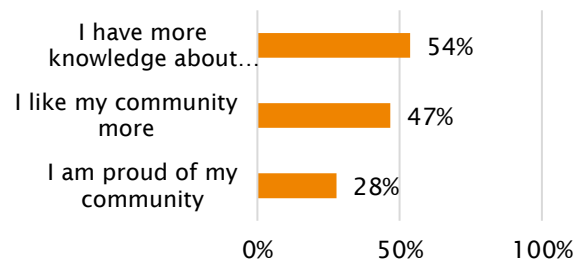
Most young people (90%) reported a more positive perception of their neighbourhood as a result of the programme.

**Fig 3.26: Participants' perception of their neighbourhood improves**



Improvements to young people's perception of their community were measured by positive responses to least one of the relevant statements shown in Figure 3.27. It was explained to young people that 'community' could refer to their local community or the school community.

**Fig. 3.27: Perception of community - % of young people responding positively**



A similar number of young people (91%) reported a heightened sense of belong to a community.

**Fig 3.28: Participants have a heightened sense of belonging to a community**

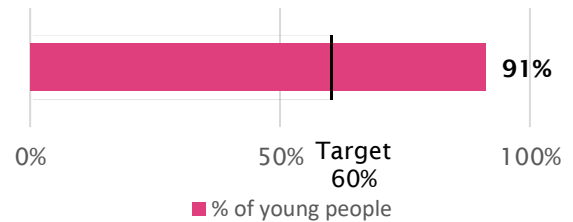
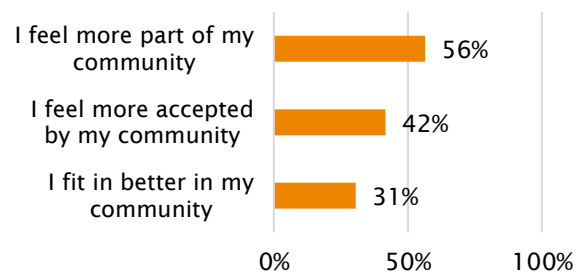


Figure 3.29 shows the indicators for this outcome – once again young people were asked to consider their feelings towards either the local community or their school community.

**Fig. 3.29: Belonging to community - % of young people responding positively**



In interviews, discussion of community tended to focus on the community created by the programme itself. As mentioned, young people, reported feeling a sense of inclusion and pride at being part of School of Football and this helped some young people feel closer links with the school.

Positive feedback from school staff about their progress in School of Football, getting to represent the school through School of Football, having dedicated kit and getting rewards for their efforts (e.g. trips arranged through the programme) were all examples

that young people gave of the ways in which the programme had helped them feel more positively about their school.

**Other Stakeholders**

Just over four-fifths (84%) of other stakeholders reported that young people had improved their contribution to, links with or social interaction with their community.

**Fig 3.30: Other stakeholders perceive improvement in YP contribution, links and social interaction**

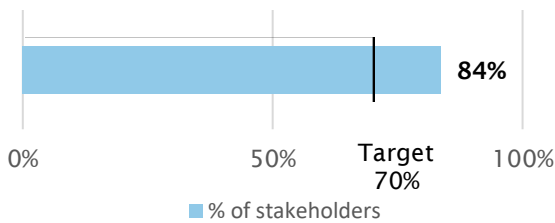
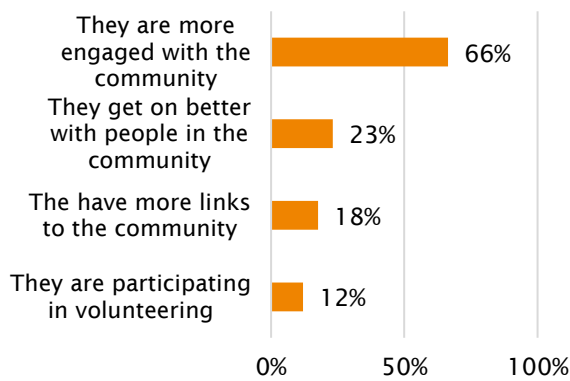


Figure 3.31 indicates the areas in which stakeholder felt young people had improved their relationship to the community.

**Fig. 3.31 Contribution, links and social interaction - % of stakeholders responding positively**



In interviews, school staff and coaches spoke about the sense of inclusion and belonging young people felt being part of School of Football and how this in turn can create better links with the school community.

Forging closer links with football clubs out in the local community, and how this can provide a positive focus for them outside of school hours, was also mentioned by interviewees.

*"Some of the young people have been more engaged in the community. This gives them a positive space for them to spend their time."*

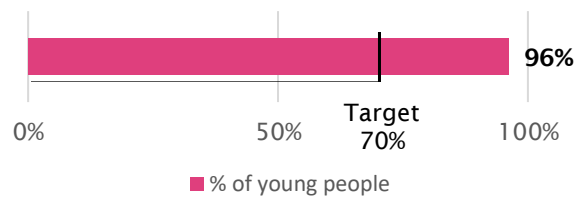
**Teacher**

**Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system**

**Young People**

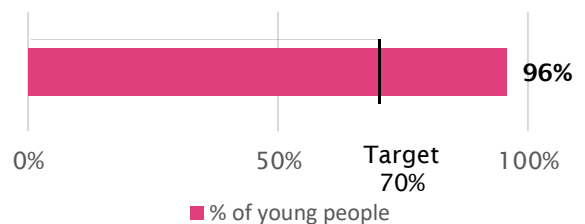
Around a third (39%) of young people reported that participating in antisocial and criminal behaviour was not an issue for them before taking part in the programme. Of the remaining group, 96% said that being part of School of Football had reduced their involvement in this type of behaviour.

**Fig 3.32: Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced**



A similar proportion of young people (42%) reported that they were not previously inclined towards antisocial or criminal behaviour. For those that were, School of Football had made 96% of them feel less inclined to do so.

**Fig 3.33: Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour.**



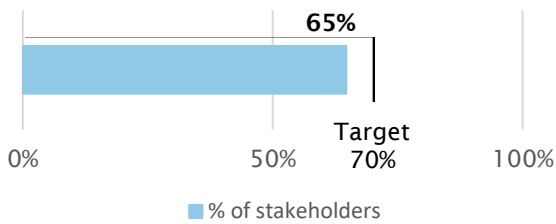
Whilst discussions of anti-social or criminal behaviour did not feature prominently in interviews with young people, it is likely that the programme's impact on this outcome is due, at least in part, to the general standards of behaviour expected of young people, discussed above.

There was evidence in interviews that young people had been encouraged to be more reflective on their own behaviour, and for those who previously engaged in anti-social or criminal behaviour, it follows that they would think more about how these actions could affect their participation in the programme.

### Other Stakeholders

Around two-thirds of stakeholders (65%) reported that the programme had contributed to a reduction in anti-social or criminal behaviour in the local area, slightly below the target of 70%.

**Fig 3.34: Other stakeholders report that participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced**



As with young people, comments from stakeholders around this outcome tended to relate to the programme's impact on young people's behaviour more generally.

However, school stakeholders also spoke about specific occasions where young people had learned about the consequences of anti-social behaviour (e.g. during dedicated workshops) and how this had helped some to gain a better perspective on this behaviour.

Stakeholders also mentioned closer links between young people and clubs and increased partnership working between schools and clubs as a factor in reducing the likelihood that young people's free time would be spent participating in anti-social or criminal behaviour.

---

*"They have learned about the results of anti-social behaviour."*

Teacher

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## Programme Delivery

Stakeholders' views on programme delivery were largely in line with findings from previous evaluations of School of Football in this and previous phases of CashBack. Therefore, a summary of these views is provided below, rather than a more detailed analysis.

### Wider benefits of the programme

For schools, the programme can be an effective tool for engaging with young people and contributing to improvements in their attendance and attainment.

Similarly, though not all schools approach the programme in this way, it can be a useful incentive for encouraging positive behaviours and curbing negative ones in young people. This has benefits for the wider school in creating role models, giving pupils opportunities for validation and achievement, and minimising disruption caused by misbehaviour.

School of football can be an additional means of reinforcing school values and has proven useful for creating better links between young people and the school community.

The programme can be a platform for schools to work towards strategic aims (e.g. around getting young people to be more active or easing primary transitions) and often enables schools to improve their 'offer' to young people.

For clubs, involvement in the programme can have positive outcomes in the recruitment of players, increasing the visibility or reputation of the club locally, and helping clubs to deliver on their strategic aims in the community.

### Support from the Scottish FA

Schools have a positive relationship with Scottish FA staff which allows for the smooth running of the programme in general.

School staff and club coaches value the quality of communication from the Scottish FA, their responsiveness to requests and feedback, as well as the regularity with which Scottish FA staff check in with them.

Monitoring requirements are viewed as manageable and appropriate, and schools/coaches feel well supported to deliver the programme requirements. The flexibility to deliver the programme in a way that suits each individual school is also appreciated.

## Reflections on the programme overall

As we were consulting towards the end of the Phase of CashBack funding, and it was already understood that Schools of Football would not be continuing through CashBack (at least in the same format) going forward, we asked stakeholders to provide views on the programme overall that may help to inform the Scottish FA's future plans.

### Successes/Challenges

We asked stakeholders to consider what elements of the programme contributed to successful delivery in their school and what parts they felt should be retained in any future iteration of it. Comments included:

- 
- Ensuring that the programme is in some way an incentive or reward for young people and not essentially open to anyone who wants to take part. Particularly when using School of Football as a tool for improving attendance or behaviour, some schools have had greater success when there is an element of carrot/stick to the programme as a motivator for young people.
- 
- Making the programme an addition to the curriculum rather than extra-curricular, as young people don't attach the same value to after school activities.
- 
- The provision of kit through the programme has proven highly beneficial on a number of levels. As well as addressing financial barriers to participation, dedicated kit helps to promote responsibility among young people, give them a sense of pride and create a shared identity for participants.
- 
- The programme has focused on the right areas and schools, every school can evidence a clear need for this type of programme.
- 

In addition, we asked stakeholders for their thoughts on suggested changes or lessons learned that might improve the programme going forward:

- 
- A couple of interviewees were concerned that the programme has become too focused on overall numbers of young people participating, at the expense of the quality of the experience. They

suggested that working with fewer young people in a more intensive way would result in better outcomes.

- 
- While in general coaches make a good contribution towards the success of the programme, the quality or effectiveness of these coaches can vary. One interviewee suggested that a P.E. teacher led model might be a better fit for ensuring consistency of delivery as they have established relationships with pupils and already have the skillset to work with young people. This may also make day-to-day management of the programme easier.
- 
- Several stakeholders said they would like to develop a clearer pathway right through school so that the programme doesn't necessarily end for young people when they progress to senior school. Building a qualification into the programme was also suggested by stakeholders.
- 
- A greater focus on primary schools and the transition to secondary.
- 

### **Future plans**

Stakeholders were clear that to lose the programme entirely would be a significant blow, particularly given the positive outcomes it contributes to.

Some schools we spoke to had hoped to keep School of Football going in some capacity, possibly as a part of the P.E. curriculum or using school staff in place of club coaches, albeit in a way the likely would be scaled back from what is currently delivered. It should be noted that some schools already deliver a non-CashBack School of Football for pupils in S3 upwards.

However, schools were unsure about the viability of continuing the programme in the longer term without additional funding as without this it would be difficult for clubs to remain involved and with the financial, resource and staff constraints already on schools, it may prove too challenging for some.

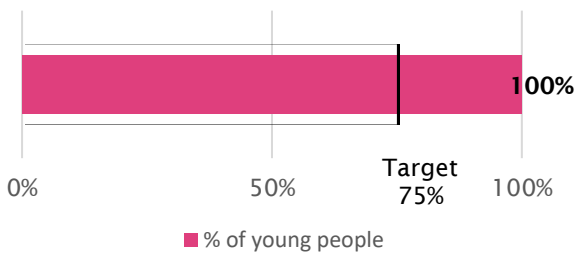
# 4. VIP: Year 3 Impact

This section describes the impact of the Volunteer and Inspire Programme (VIP) on the young people participating. Data in this section is taken from surveys completed by participants in the programme.

## Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour

All young people said that taking part in the programme had made them feel more able to try new things.

**Fig 4.1: Young people feel able to do new things**



Most young people (89%) reported improved support networks as a result of taking part in the programme.

**Fig 4.2: Young people report positive, supportive networks**

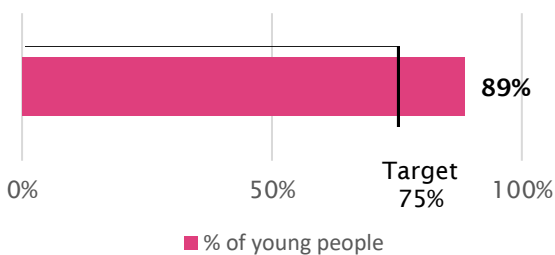
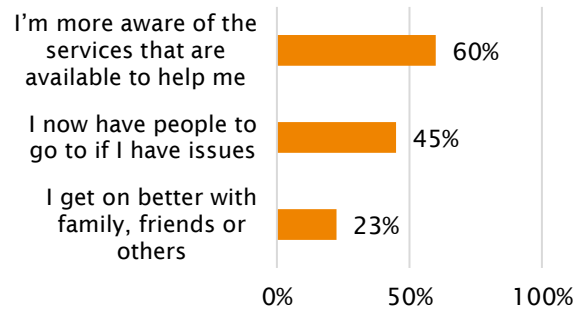


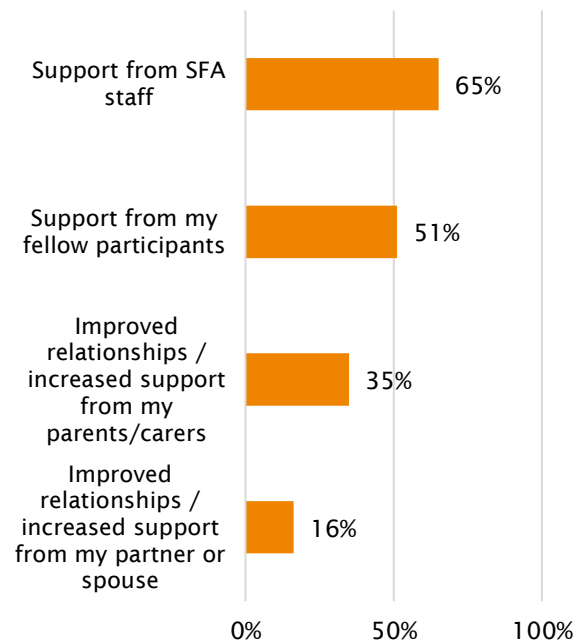
Figure 4.3 demonstrates the ways in which young people reported their support networks had improved.

**Fig. 4.3: Support networks - % of young people responding positively**



Young people were asked to indicate from whom they now had additional sources of support thanks to the programme. As Fig. 4.4 shows, the majority of young people benefitted from the support provided by programme staff and participants, though some had also gained additional support from their families as a result of being involved in VIP.

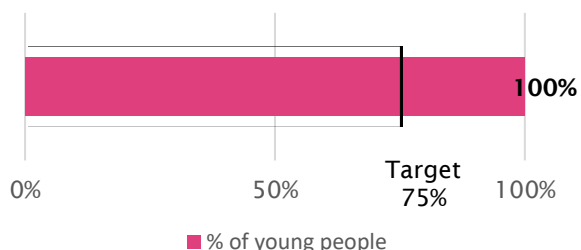
**Fig. 4.4: Additional support - % of young people responding positively**



### Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills

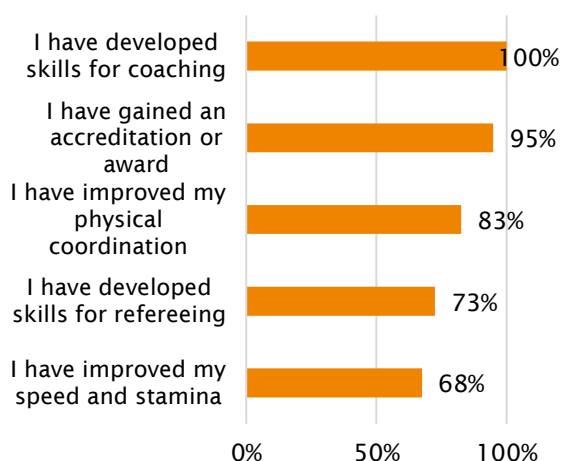
All young people said that they had increased their skills as a result of VIP.

**Fig 4.5: Young people report their skills are increasing**

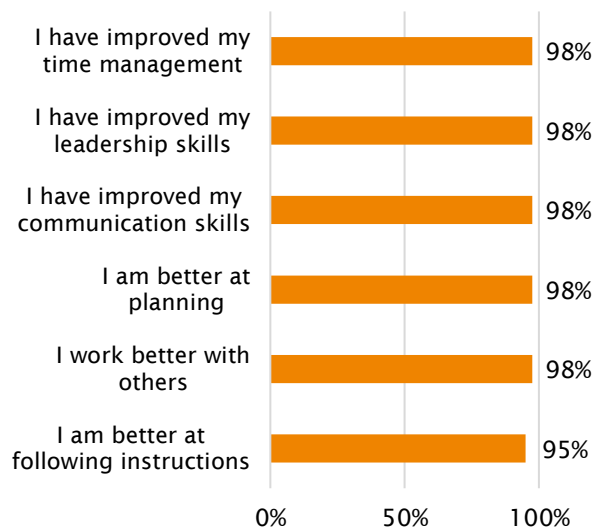


As well as gaining skills specific to football or coaching (Fig. 4.6), young people also improvements to a wide range of personal skills (Fig. 4.7).

**Fig. 4.6: Technical skills - % of young people responding positively**



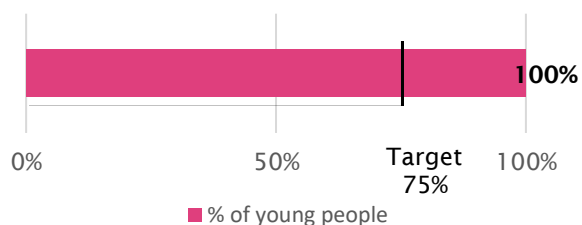
**Fig. 4.7: Skills - % of young people responding positively**



### Outcome 3: Young people's health and well-being improves

All young people reported positive changes in their wellbeing through participation in the programme.

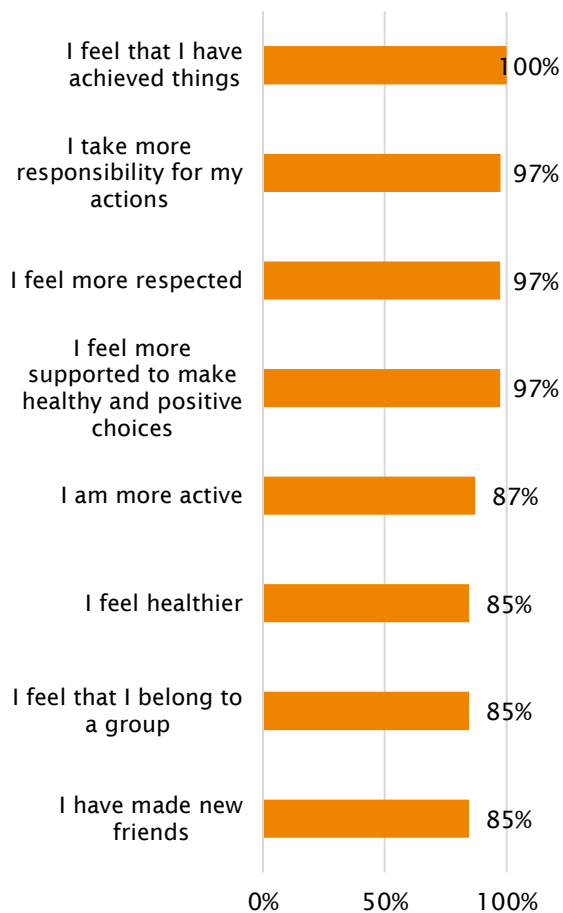
**Fig 4.8: Young people report increases in feelings against SHANARRI indicators**



Most young people experienced improved wellbeing across the whole range of SHANARRI indicators (see Fig. 4.9).



**Fig. 4.9: Wellbeing - % of young people responding positively**



**Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)**

All young people reported progress towards a positive destination as a result of the programme.

**Fig 4.11: Young people achieve a positive destination**

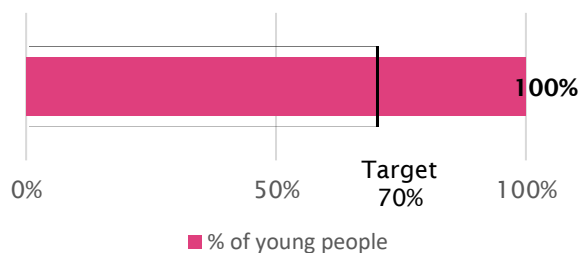
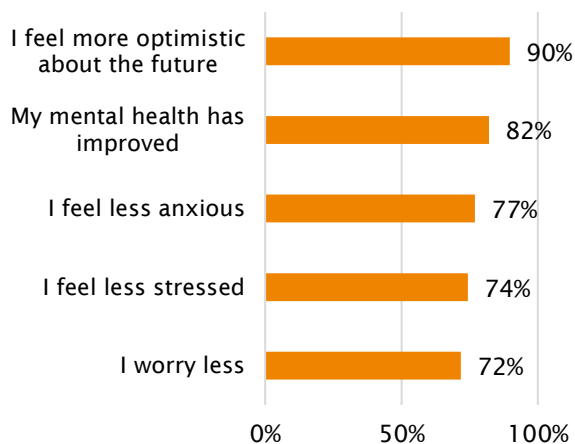


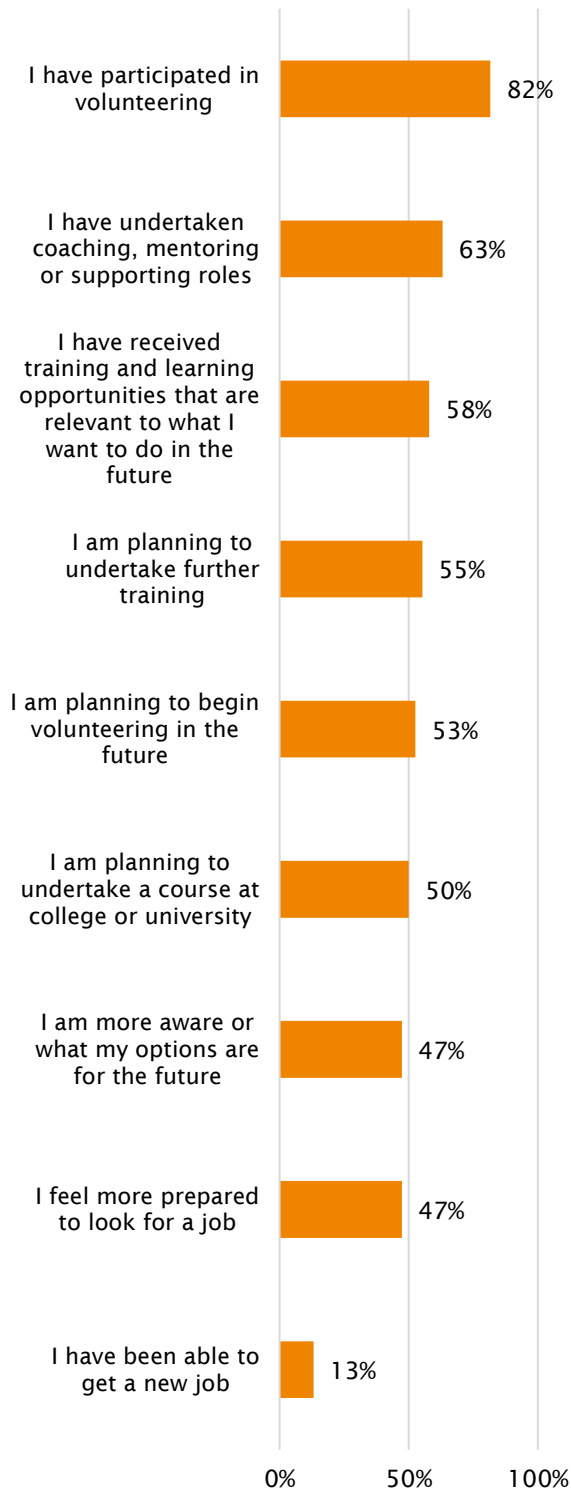
Figure 4.12 shows the ways in which young people reported they have progressed towards positive destinations. Most commonly, young people have had the opportunity to volunteer or gain experience in roles of responsibility. A significant number had plans to pursue employment, education or training, with some already having secured a new job thanks to their involvement in the programme.

Young people were also asked to reflect on the impact the programme has had on their mental health – see Fig. 4.10.

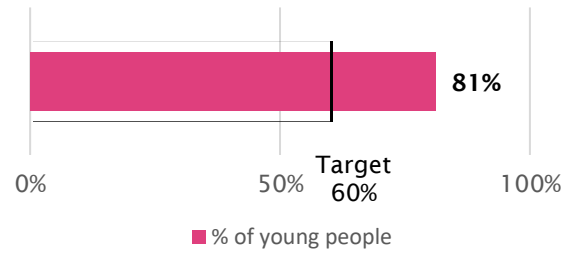
**Fig. 4.10: Mental health - % of young people responding positively**



**Fig. 4.12: Positive destinations as a result of the programme - % of young people responding positively**

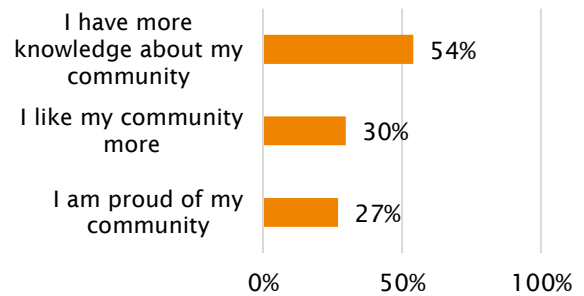


**Fig 4.13: Participants' perception of their neighbourhood improves**



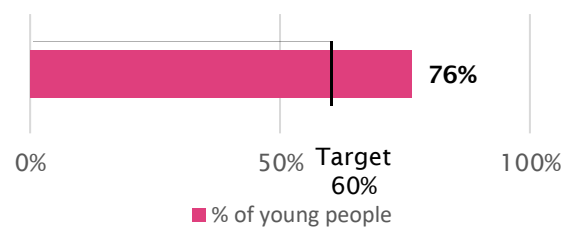
For most young people, a more positive perspective of their community was as a result of learning more about their community through the programme (see Fig. 4.14).

**Fig. 4.14: Perception of community - % of young people responding positively**



Around three-quarters of young people (76%) agreed that they felt a greater sense of belonging to their community through being part of the programme.

**Fig 4.15 : Participants have a heightened sense of belonging to a community**

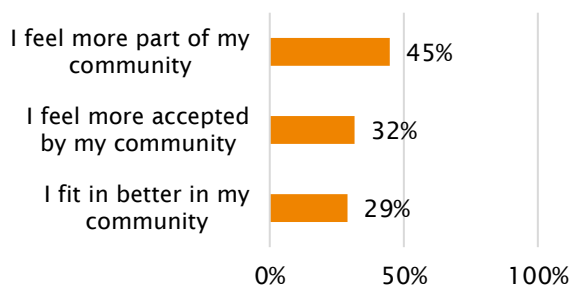


Most commonly, young people reported this heightened sense of belonging as being the result of feeling more part of their community (see Fig. 4.16).

**Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities**

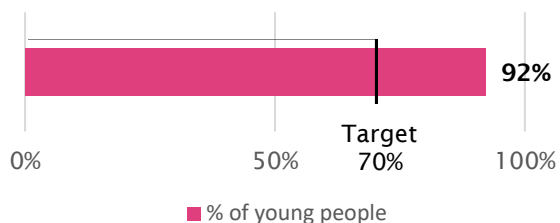
Over four fifths (81%) of young people reported that they had a more positive perception of their neighbourhood as a result of VIP.

**Fig. 4.16: Belonging to community - % of young people responding positively**



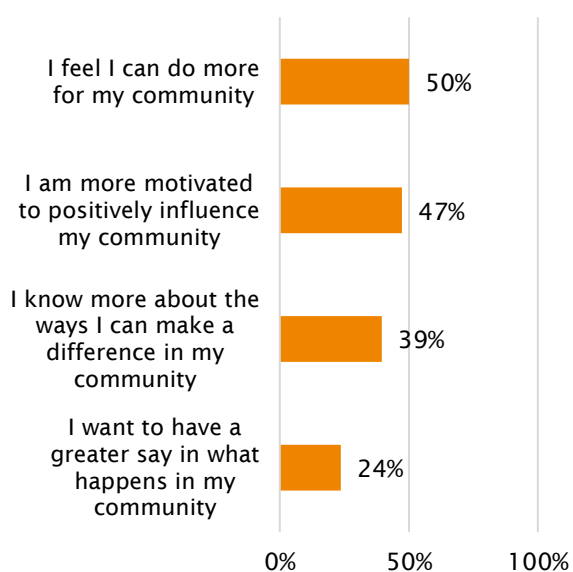
Most participants (92%) agreed that they felt more motivated to positively influence their communities.

**Fig 4.17: Participants have increased motivation to positively influence what happens in their community**



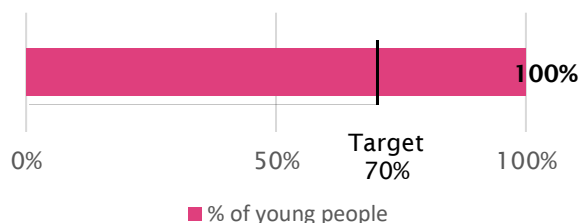
This increased motivation was measured by young people responding positively to at least one of the statements shown in Fig. 4.18.

**Fig. 4.18: Motivation - % of young people responding positively**



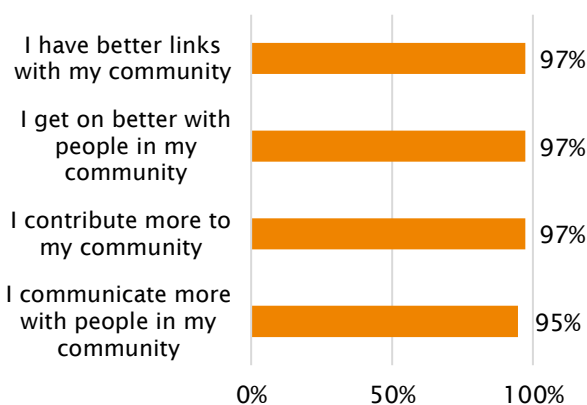
All young people reported that their contribution to, links with and social interactions in the community had improved as a result of the programme.

**Fig 4.19: Young people feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving**



As Fig 4.20 demonstrates, most young people reported improvements across all indicators for this question.

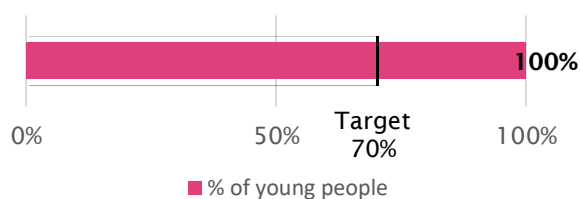
**Fig. 4.20: Contribution, links and social interaction - % of young people responding positively**



**Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system**

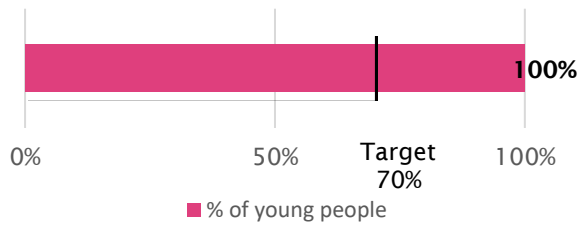
For those participants previously involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour (42% of all participants), all reported that the programme has helped them to reduce their involvement in this type of behaviour.

**Fig 4.21: Young people report that their own participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced**



Similarly, for those participants previously inclined towards anti-social or criminal behaviour (39% of all participants), all reported that the programme has helped them to feel less so.

**Fig 4.22: Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour.**



## 5. School of Football Case Study

This section describes the experience a young person who has taken part in the School of Football programme and the difference it has made to them. The participant's name has been changed.

### Ben's Story

Ben is in S1 and started School of Football when he came up to secondary school. Though he enjoyed playing football in his free time, he had never played for a team or had much experience of being coached. When the opportunity arose to join School of Football, he was keen but unsure what to expect.

### Confidence

Ben has always been fairly quiet, usually letting others take the lead and being a bit anxious to speak up in front of people. However, being part of School of Football encouraged him to work on this while doing something he enjoys. To improve on the pitch and be an effective member of the team he learned the importance of communicating with his teammates.

The relaxed environment of the School of Football sessions allowed him to open up a bit more, without worrying that he would say or do the wrong thing – in Ben's words, "What happens on the pitch, stays on the pitch." Before he knew it, he was regularly asking for the ball and giving his teammates instructions and encouragement. His progress on the pitch has made him much more confident in social situations off it too.

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*"I used to get really anxious taking to people, but not anymore."*

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### Resilience

Making improvements with something Ben found difficult in the past has helped to reinforce the lessons in resilience he has learned through the programme. His coach talks to the group regularly about positive ways to manage problems, responding to difficult situations and coping with failure. His experience in School of Football has given him a new perspective on dealing with setbacks:

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*"If I make a mistake, I know it can just be fixed."*

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It's not only during School of Football sessions or on the pitch that these lessons have helped Ben. He has applied this improved resilience to his everyday life, helping him with his schoolwork and home life.

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*"If I'm in the house and I've done something wrong, I'll just remember what [coach] has said and that will help."*

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### Support Networks

Ben really values the lessons he has learned from his School of Football coach, but the relationship has wider benefits for him too. It's a different relationship to the ones that Ben has with his teachers or family and even though the coach pushes him on to do better, it feels different to how other adults treat him.

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*"He'll be strict, but not in a teacher way or a parent way."*

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Ben's coach will also regularly check in with him and his teammates about how they are doing and what is happening in their school and home lives. Ben appreciates this and it has made him feel comfortable sharing his feelings with his coach.

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*"I'll talk to him about things I'm struggling with."*

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Ben also draws support from the friends he has made through School of Football. Being more confident to communicate with people and the opportunity to spend time with his teammates has opened Ben up to new and stronger friendships.

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*"I used to just talk to them, now they're proper pals."*

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## 6. Learning Through Football

This section explores two CashBack schools' experience of working with football clubs to deliver football-based learning activities.

### Introduction

As the outcomes described above demonstrate, Cashback Schools of Football have been successful in providing football-based learning opportunities where young people can develop and achieve outside of the traditional classroom setting.

Now well-established following several Phases of Cashback funding, Schools of Football have also led to closer partnership working between schools and community football clubs.

With CashBack Phase 5 drawing to a close, the Scottish FA have already begun thinking about how to build on these successful elements of the programme going forward. This thinking is also aligned to their broader *Learning Through Football* approach.

*Learning Through Football*<sup>2</sup> embodies the Scottish FA's commitment to providing everyone opportunities to participate in football regardless of ability or background, while at the same time using the power and pull of football to 'engage, enthuse, challenge and motivate learners'. As well as being a guiding approach, the Scottish FA's online Learning Through Football platform provides educators with a range of practical resources to support teaching within the context of football, in-line with the Curriculum for Excellence<sup>3</sup>.

To provide additional insight into the success of this football-as-learning approach, the following case studies explore two CashBack schools' experience of partnering with clubs to deliver football-based learning activities and the impact this has had. These case studies are based on in-depth interviews with school staff, club representatives and young people.

### The need for additional/alternative learning opportunities

The Curriculum for Excellence highlights the importance of accounting for each learner's individual needs and how young people will benefit from "different approaches to learning and opportunities to access learning in different contexts." Similarly it establishes a role of external partners to offer links between schools and local

communities and provide contextualised approaches to learning and teaching.

Schools, clubs, and young people themselves recognised the need for offering additional or alternative learning opportunities. In particular, there was an acknowledgement that the classroom setting is not necessarily suited to every pupil and football-based activities can be an effective tool for engaging these young people in some form of education. As well as encouraging some these young people to attend education, learning through football can help to keep their interest sufficiently that they will maintain this engagement.

Schools also valued the opportunities for young people to interact with people other than teachers or their peers. This creates enhanced links to the community and can help to broaden their horizons.

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*"It's difficult to hook them in if you're teaching something they're not interested in."*

*"For a lot of our first and second years their five periods a week of school football is a huge incentive to get them into school. And then obviously, that means they're in other classes, which means that they're giving themselves every opportunity to attain."*

*"it's about keeping them engaged and coming into school so that by 4th Year the relationships are well established, and they've got a more stable chance."*

*"Unless they're pushed to do it [learn through alternative opportunities], some young people might go through the entirety of school and all they'd done is just come in in the morning and leave in the afternoon."*

School staff

*"Can we give the best chance to each kid to succeed? And that may be that they don't come to school on a Monday, but they go up to [the club] instead. And as long as they're working hard, they're enjoying it, and they potentially ending up with qualifications then I think it's absolutely important that we can continue to provide these opportunities."*

<sup>2</sup><https://learningthroughfootball.scottishfa.co.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/>

### Club coach

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#### The advantages of partnering with a football club

The popularity of football and its ability to draw young people in underpins the Scottish FA's Learning Through Football approach. In the context of school partnerships this was also seen as a unique advantage, as opportunities provided by or alongside football clubs can be very attractive to young people with an existing interest in the sport.

Similarly, the reputation, popularity, or visibility of a particular club in the local area can lend a credibility to the work they do with schools, more so than if alternative learning opportunities were offered through other organisations.

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*"I think if it was just a charity in the local area, there maybe wouldn't be that same draw for the kids."*

School staff member

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School staff also saw the potential for football clubs to be complementary to schools in when they could offer opportunities. While schools may be limited by school hours and term-times, clubs can offer opportunities during evenings, weekends, and school holidays.

#### Learning Through Football – A good foundation: Lornshill Academy

Lornshill Academy in Alloa has been involved in the School of Football programme since 2012. Their current programme is run in partnership with the Wasp Community Club, the charitable arm of Alloa Athletic FC.

Whilst previous iterations were delivered entirely by P.E. staff, working with the club in the most recent Phase of CashBack has added a new dimension to the programme. P.E. staff now work with club coaches to deliver sessions, meaning that young people (and school staff) are able to benefit from the expertise of qualified coaches. In addition, some of these coaches have been former pupils of the school, who serve as role models for current pupils.

The closer links between the school and the club has led to an increase in young people getting involved in the club's community programmes and other opportunities outside of school hours. Current and former School of Football participants have taken up playing and coaching opportunities with the club and regularly attend the Midnight League programme.

### Impact

The school of Football programme at Lornshill is an example of the success to be had from offering young people alternative learning opportunities. As is typical of CashBack Schools of Football, there have been positive outcomes for participants across a range of areas.

School staff spoke in particular about how the programme had helped to keep some young people in school and able to achieve, as well as positively influencing their maturity, behaviour and attitude towards school.

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*"We're really proud of our 4th Year group who went through the programme... when they were in S2 there were concerns about whether they'd still be in school in S4/5."*

*"Football's been their mainstay throughout school. It's been a massive source of self-belief for them because they're good at it."*

School staff

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This was also borne out in the reflections of young people who spoke about finding school a more inviting place because they had this opportunity or how it had changed their mindset about education for the better. There was also acknowledgement from a couple of young people that earlier in their school life, the classroom hadn't been the best environment for them to learn in.

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*"I used to not be that motivated in school, but School of football made me want to commit to it."*

Pupil

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### Looking Ahead

Though the School of Football at Lornshill Academy has been an undoubted success, the programme is in transition. At the end of CashBack Phase 5, like many schools Lornshill will no longer be funded through CashBack to deliver the programme. Whilst they intend to keep it going, this will likely revert to the P.E. led model used in previous years.

The school are keen to their partnership with the club, but are aware that there would need to be a focus for this relationship to be maintained:

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*"Schools are busy places – there are many drivers and innovations, but if a strong link isn't maintained it falls by the wayside."*

### *School staff member*

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Staff and pupils would be interested in a range of opportunities that could potentially be developed with the club. As well as hoping to continue to have input from club coaches, staff and pupils were particularly interested in what activities could be offered that would be additional to what has been done already through School of Football.

This might include volunteering opportunities or internships with the club, not only coaching but in operational roles as well. This could be particularly beneficial for senior pupils and/or those interested in pursuing careers in football or sport more generally.

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*"Club coaches have a depth of knowledge that PE staff don't have."*

### *Pupil*

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Whilst funding would always be an issue, there was agreement that the positive relationship the school has developed with the club through School of Football would provide a solid base for developing further opportunities for young people.

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*"We'll keep up links with the club however we can and in whatever way the club want to be involved."*

### *School staff member*

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## **Learning Through Football - Further developed: Craigroyston Community High School**

The partnership between Craigroyston Community High School and The Spartans Community Football Academy has grown significantly beyond the School of Football delivered in this and previous phases of CashBack funding.

Currently the club delivers School of Football in Craigroyston for pupils up to the end of S2, with the school delivering a continuation of the programme for pupils up to the end of S4. For those that have aged out of CashBack School of Football and/or are interested in exploring alternative learning, the club works with the school to offer a range of opportunities.

Craigroyston pupils have undertaken internships with Spartans' Education Officers, working in local primary schools. As well as helping with football coaching sessions, interns support the delivery of the club's three key primary school projects – BeME (mental health awareness), SPHERO Superstars

(STEM Learning activities) and, Roots, Shoots and Scores (sustainable living project). Interns work directly with primary school pupils and gain insights into working in schools and the role of the club's education officers.

Pupils have also taken part in internships based in the club itself, shadowing and receiving mentoring from club staff including those in executive, operational and youth worker roles.

A few Craigroyston pupils have been part of Spartans' Alternative School, which provides young people who are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education, or find the classroom setting challenging, an alternative place to learn and develop. Pupils attend the club and receive one-to-one support in key subjects, work on personal development and are encouraged to take part in volunteering or work experience.

More generally, the club has become a safe space in the community for many young people, with Craigroyston pupils now a regular fixture at the community pitch outside of school hours and are often attending club-run clubs, such as the FooTea youth work programme.

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*"It's so embedded now; it just feels like they're part of the school."*

### *School staff member*

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## **Impact**

The partnership between the school and the club has been significant in ensuring the engagement of many young people. School staff were positive that the alternative learning opportunities on offer had helped to keep young people in school and therefore gaining learning and qualifications that they wouldn't otherwise have. Similarly, beyond preventing these pupils from disengaging in school it potentially kept them from more harmful behaviours:

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*"There are young people who would probably be involved in potentially criminal behaviour if they didn't have this. Because they would just have stopped attending school."*

### *School staff member*

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From the school's perspective, working with the club enables them to offer experiences to pupils that they would otherwise be able to. Though wider opportunities are not reserved exclusively for CashBack pupils, there is also now a clear pathway for many young people through their school life,



from starting School of football in S1 to taking up volunteering or further development opportunities with the club in senior school.

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*"They've been able to give our kids lots of extra opportunities."*

*School staff member*

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The presence of the club in the school day-to-day and the work they have done with pupils in the community has led to the development positive relationships for young people. Whether with the club's School of Football coaches, Education Officers, Youth Workers, or other staff, young people have been able to access a wider network of people for support, mentoring or advice as a result of the partnership between Craigoyston and Spartans. This has also helped to foster a greater sense of community around the school.

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*"It creates that real community feel about the place."*

*School staff member*

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Young people and schools value the opportunities for real-world learning delivered in partnership with the club. As well as gaining work experience, it has been helpful for some young people in forming ideas about what they like about certain roles and what they might like to do in future.

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*"I was in S4 and had to think about what I want to do in the future – this was really helpful."*

*Pupil*

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Getting out into the community has also been useful in broadening the horizons of young people, exposing them to people and situations they wouldn't necessarily come across in the classroom setting. Young people spoke about having gained new perspectives from interacting with people in the community.

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*"It opened my eyes to opportunities I didn't know about."*

*Pupil*

*"Some of the young pupils are actually gaining access to people who are making big decisions in their community, like our CEO."*

*Club coach*

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Some young people have remained active in the community and sustained volunteering through the club in the longer term. Pupils from Craigoyston have gone on to take up paid coaching positions with Spartans, as well as using their experiences of working with the club in school to inform their choices after leaving school.

### Replicating the approach

Strong and regular communication and a focus on relationships were identified as key element of the successful partnership between Craigoyston and Spartans.

The school has embraced embedding the club as part of school life, meaning the club is present in the school day-to-day, attends parents' evenings, is involved in tracking and monitoring processes and plays a role in conversations about young people's development.

Having open conversations about needs, as well as what will and won't work in a particular school, can also lead to more tailored alternative learning opportunities for young people:

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*"It's about starting that conversation and seeing how can we help the head teachers, what do they need? And then what can we provide? And then its finding that middle ground to say, this is what we can do for you, and this is what you need. So this is a project we'll put in place."*

*Club coach*

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A reciprocal relationship between the club and the pupils is also beneficial – being treated as another partner in the relationship is something that wasn't lost on one of the young people we spoke to:

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*"[they say] you come down and help us and we'll help you. It's never a one-sided thing."*

*Pupil*

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### Key lessons

Our discussions with school staff, club representatives and young people demonstrated that alternative football-based learning opportunities can provide significant value and impact for young people and schools.

The foundation for partnership working between schools and football clubs established through CashBack Schools of Football provides a solid basis for schools and clubs, along with the Scottish FA, to explore what these opportunities might be going

forward. Some schools and clubs have already made good progress in this, as with Craigroyston and Spartans, giving examples of good practice to learn from for those at an earlier stage of development.

## 7. Conclusions

This section summarises the key findings from the evaluation and highlights the key lessons learned.

### Conclusions

#### Year 3 Overall

1. With one exception, the programme has met or exceeded every target in the CashBack Logic Model in Year 3.

#### Schools of Football

2. Most young people experience improvements in their confidence as a result of taking part in the programme. As well as growing confidence in their own abilities on the football pitch, the School of Football environment support young people to build their social confidence, overcome shyness and social anxiety and feel more able to take on new activities.
3. All young people taking part in the programme have been able to build up their own resilience as a result of taking part in the programme, reporting improvement across several areas, including, Increased self-belief, perseverance, ability to handle difficult situations, and greater control over their emotions.
4. Positive relationships develop between participants and delivery staff, and young people form strong bonds with their fellow participants which carry over off the pitch as well. As a result, most young people on the programme benefit from greater support networks.
5. young people report improvements to their own behaviour resulting from the programme, both in and out of school. Reinforced by a fear of missing out on School of Football and the general expectations placed on participants, young people learn to be, for example, more respectful, considerate, responsible, motivated, and encouraging of others. Stakeholders also observe positive behavioural changes in young people.
6. All young people have been able to gain new skills or develop existing ones through the programme. Feedback demonstrates that the programme gives young people a platform to develop their abilities across a wide range of

personal, physical, and football-specific skill areas.

7. The programme contributes to improvements across multiple signifiers of wellbeing for the majority of young people. Aside from the obvious benefits to physical health from playing sport more regularly, the programme has a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of many young people and gives them opportunities to achieve things, be included and take on roles of responsibility.
8. For those who have previously had issues in these areas, school attendance and attainment are positively affected by participation in School of Football. Young people take the positive mood gained from the programme into other classes and find their school day easier to cope with on days they have School of Football.
9. Most young people feel more connected to their community as a result of School of Football. This was felt most significantly in relation to their school community, where young people felt more included by others, received positive feedback from others, and had opportunities to represent their school community through the programme.
10. For most of those young people taking part in School of Football who have previously had issues around anti-social or criminal behaviour, the programme has been influential in reducing their involvement in this and making them feel less inclined to get involved in this type of behaviour in future.
11. In Year 3, the programme has continued to run smoothly and deliver additional benefits for schools and local football clubs beyond the CashBack outcomes.
12. Schools are keen to keep the programme running in some form beyond the end of this Phase of CashBack funding, though the feasibility of doing this is not clear for all. Stakeholders have identified several successful elements of the programme and suggestions for development that can help to inform plans for the programme going forward.

13. The links created between schools and football clubs by School of Football can provide a useful foundation for exploring more extensive 'Learning Through Football' opportunities. These alternative, football-based learning opportunities can offer benefits for both young people and schools, as evidenced by schools/clubs that have already developed this approach.

#### VIP

14. Though in-depth consultation with VIP participants did not form part of this year's evaluation, survey responses confirm that:
- a. All young people feel better able to take on new activities as a result of the programme.
  - b. Most young people benefit from greater support networks as a result of VIP. In particular, young people gain new sources of support in the form of Scottish FA staff and their fellow participants.
  - c. All young people gain new skills through participation in VIP. As well as key coaching skills relevant to the specific courses and workshops they undertake, young people develop a range of transferable skills too.
  - d. The programme performs well on improvements to young people's wellbeing, with all young people reporting benefits and most reporting increases against multiple SHANARRI indicators.
  - e. All young people that participate in the programme make progress towards a positive destination.
  - f. The programme has been successful in positively changing most young people's view of the community, their links to the community, and their desire to influence it.
  - g. Though less than half of participants have been involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour in the past, VIP has helped all of these young people to make positive changes around this type of behaviour.

#### Performance Against CashBack Phase 5 Targets

15. The programme has met or exceeded all targets except one across the three-year delivery phase. This is a notable success, particularly given the disruption to delivery in Years 1 and 2 resulting from the pandemic.
16. The only target not met - stakeholders reporting that participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced - was narrowly missed. Given the relatively high percentage of young people who indicated that this had not been an issue for them before, the deficit under this indicator is probably at least partly as a result of the programme not working exclusively with young people who are actively involved in this type of behaviour.

# Appendix: Performance Against CashBack Targets (Detailed)

Outcome	Indicator	End of Programme Target (%)	End of Programme Target (Number of YP)	Year 1					Year 2					Year 3					Programmes	Total Number of YP in Phase 5	Remaining to achieve target				
				Actual all projects (%)	Actual all projects (Number of YP)	Actual SoF (%)	Actual SoF (Number of YP)	Actual VP (%)	Actual VP (Number of YP)	Actual all projects (%)	Actual all projects (Number of YP)	Actual SoF (%)	Actual SoF (Number of YP)	Actual VP (%)	Actual VP (Number of YP)	Actual all projects (%)	Actual all projects (Number of YP)	Actual My Community (%)				Actual My Community (Number of YP)	Actual VP (%)	Actual VP (Number of YP)	
Outcome 1: Young people build their confidence and resilience, benefit from strengthened support networks and reduce risk taking behaviour	YP demonstrate increased confidence (My Community)	75%	2475	92%	656	92%	656			98%	750	98%	750			96%	2403	96%	2403			SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba	3809	-1334	
	YP will report they are able to do new things (all projects)	75%	2700	99%	954	99%	702	100%	252	100%	934	100%	767	100%	167	100%	2619	100%	2503	100%	116	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	4507	-1807	
	YP feel more resilient (My Community)	75%	2475	99%	707	99%	707			100%	767	100%	767			100%	2503	100%	2503			SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba	3977	-1502	
	other stakeholders surveyed report perceived increases of confidence and resilience among young people	70%		†						92%						98%								95%	
	YP report positive supportive networks (all projects)	75%	2700	98%	945	99%	707	95%	238	99%	927	100%	767	96%	160	98%	2606	100%	2503	89%	103	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	4479	-1779	
	YP report positive changes in their behaviour (My Community)	75%	2475	100%	710	100%	710			100%	767	100%	767			100%	2503	100%	2503			SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba	3980	-1505	
Outcome 2: Young people develop their physical and personal skills	stakeholders surveyed report perceived positive changes in the behaviour of YP.	70%		†						68%					82%									75%	
	of YP will gain accreditation for learning and skills development (ViP)	80%	288	100%	252			100%	252		167			100%	167		116			100%	116		VIP	535	-247
	YP will demonstrate increased skills (all projects)	75%	2700	99%	958	100%	710	99%	248	100%	934	100%	767	100%	167	100%	2619	100%	2503	100%	116	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	4511	-1811	
Outcome 3: Young people's health and well-being improves	other stakeholders report skills increasing	75%		†						94%					98%									96%	
	YP will report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI indicators (All Projects)	75%	2700	100%	964	100%	712	100%	252	100%	934	100%	767	100%	167	100%	2619	100%	2503	100%	116	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	4517	-1817	
Outcome 4: Young people participate in activity which improves their learning, employability and employment options (positive destinations)	other stakeholders' report perceived increases in SHANARRI indicators among YP	70%		†						89%					98%									94%	
	YP will achieve a positive destination (VIP)	70%	252	100%	252			100%	252	100%	167			100%	167	100%	635			100%	635		VIP, Coach Education	1054	-802
	YP will improve attendance (SoF)*	70%	910	96%	315	96%	315			96%	532	96%	532			95%	529	95%	529			SoF	1375	-465	
	YP attainment improves (SoF)*	70%	910	96%	389	93%	389			96%	562	96%	562			97%	554	97%	554			SoF	1506	-596	
Outcome 5: Young people contribute positively to their communities	YP taking on a volunteering or leadership role in community organisations (VIP)	80%	288	100%	252			100%	252		167			100%	167	100%	635			100%	635		VIP, Coach Education	1054	-766
	hours of volunteering contributed by participants (VIP)		288		2352				2352		2565			2565		3175					3175		VIP, Coach Education	8092	-7804
	community focussed awards gained by participants	70%	252		0				0	100%	167			100%	167	100%	635			100%	635		VIP, Coach Education	802	-550
	YP feel their contribution, links with communities and social interaction are improving (VIP)	70%	252	97%	245			97%	245	97%	162			97%	162	100%	116			100%	116		VIP	523	-271
	stakeholders perceive improvement in YP contribution, links and social interaction	70%		†						54%						84%								70%	
	participants' perception of neighbourhood improves (all projects)	60%	2160	84%	807	85%	607	79%	200	83%	780	84%	644	81%	136	89%	2347	90%	2253	81%	94	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	3934	-1774	
	participants have a heightened sense of belonging to a community (all projects)	60%	2160	83%	786	86%	612	69%	174	87%	810	88%	671	83%	138	89%	2366	91%	2278	76%	88	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	3961	-1801	
	participants have increased motivation to positively influence their community (VIP)	70%	252	88%	222			88%	222	86%	143			86%	143	92%	107			92%	107		VIP	472	-220
Outcome 6: Young people are diverted from criminal behaviour or involvement with the criminal justice system	YP feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour*	70%	700	†	†	†	†	†	†	99%	605	99%	523	100%	82	96%	1871	96%	1826	100%	45	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	2477	-1777	
	YP reporting reduced antisocial and/or criminal behaviour*	70%	700	†	†	†	†	†	†	98%	570	98%	497	97%	73	96%	1731	96%	1682	100%	49	SoF, Club Diversity, Go Fitba, VIP	2301	-1601	
	Stakeholders reporting that participation in antisocial and/or criminal behaviour has reduced	70%		†						70%						65%								68%	
*Excluding those who said this was not an issue before																									
† No data																									

Find out more  
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