



Achieve More Scotland A CashBack Difference

CashBack for Communities Phase 5 Evaluation and Learning Report



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A CashBack Difference

Achieve More Scotland ran A CashBack Difference from 2020 to 2023, as part of Phase Five of the national CashBack for Communities programme.

A CashBack Difference involved weekly early intervention and diversionary based activities for young people aged 10 to 24. Young people were engaged in regular, fun and structured group activities to build cohesion and work across communities to break down territorial barriers and help reduce crime. Targeted inputs around drug and alcohol misuse, healthy eating and physical inactivity were also provided.

A CashBack Difference focused on identified areas in Glasgow, South Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire and aimed to work with a total of 3,000 young people between 2020 and 2023.

A CashBack Difference was delivered in community venues and through schools. There were also opportunities for some young people to gain training and leadership opportunities, and move into volunteering and employment with Achieve More Scotland.



In 2020, at the time of the emergence of the global Covid-19 pandemic, Achieve More Scotland also offered food parcels and vouchers to thousands of people in seven targeted communities across Glasgow and North Lanarkshire.

A CashBack Difference was awarded up to £500,000 to deliver its activities between April 2020 and March 2023. The funding covered sessional coaching costs, venue hire, transport, co-ordination, clothing, equipment, volunteering qualifications, management and external evaluation.



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A CashBack Difference Participants

Total participants

Across 2020 to 2023 Achieve More Scotland's A CashBack Difference aimed to engage with a total of 3,000 young people from areas of high deprivation in Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire.


Activity was lower in 2020 due to the restrictions in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, activity returned to expected levels in spring 2022. Across the three years, A CashBack Difference engaged 3,098 participants - exceeding its target.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Target
573	1,171	1,354	3,098	3,000

Age

Most participants - around two thirds - were aged 10 to 15. In part, this was due to the pandemic and restrictions on group activity for people aged 12 and over. However, as restrictions eased later in Years 2 and 3, activity began to involve more teenagers.





	Age 10-15	Age 16-18	Age 19-24
Year 1	502	48	23
Year 2	783	348	40
Year 3	665	616	73
Total*	1,950	1,012	136
%	63%	33%	4%

Deprivation

All of the young people that Achieve More Scotland worked with across all three years of the programme lived in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland, based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. A CashBack Difference is delivered in areas of high deprivation in Glasgow, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire, and targeted in neighbourhoods and schools with particularly high levels of deprivation.

Gender

Overall just over half of participants were male and just under half were female.

	Male	Female
Year 1	293	280
Year 2	701	470
Year 3	654	548
Total*	1,648	1,298
%	56%	44%

*Information not available for all participants

However, overall this broad balance of involvement between young men and young women is notable, as many sport and physical activity programmes find it very challenging to engage young women of the 10-24 age group. In Scotland more generally, participation in sport and physical activity falls off significantly as young women move through secondary school. A gap in sports participation between boys and girls emerges at around 13 to 15 years old, and continues through into adulthood¹. Continuing to ensure a balance between young men and women will be important for year 3 of CashBack.

Wider characteristics

Achieve More Scotland statistics show that 42% of participants were from a black or minority ethnic background.

As part of foundation work to inform the evaluation method, it was agreed that due to the drop-in nature of the programme coupled with the age of participants, AMS would not gather information on disability, sexual orientation, religion or gender reassignment. The need for an age appropriate approach to gathering equality information across the CashBack programme was also discussed with Inspiring Scotland.



¹ <https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/2598/learning-note-women-in-sport.pdf>

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Impact on young people

Confidence and resilience

The numbers

A CashBack Difference is supporting young people to develop their confidence, resilience and support networks. This is helping young people to feel able to do new things and bring about positive changes in their behaviour.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Young people report confidence increasing	100%	82%	88%	90%
Young people report being able to do new things	97%	83%	86%	89%
Young people feel more resilient/believe in themselves	97%*	91%	92%	93%
Young people report positive support networks	100%	86%	100%	95%
Young people report positive changes in their behaviour	97%*	81%	92%	90%
Stakeholders report perceived positive changes in their behaviour	100%	100%	100%	100%
Stakeholders report increased confidence and resilience of young participants	100%	100%	100%	100%

The evidence for year 1 is based on Achieve More Scotland surveys with young people, implemented as games and activities within sessions. The evidence for years 2 and 3 is from a face-to-face survey of 169 participants in football, dance and multisport activities.

Views and experiences

Young people talked about the impact that A CashBack Difference had on their confidence. Almost all said that their confidence had increased since being involved in the project.



It gave me a big confidence boost."

Em I actually used to be quite shy before coming here, I feel like over the years I've become more confident and able to speak to more people."

- Young participants

Many felt that it helped them to feel more confident at communicating with people and making friends.



Before this, I didn't really know how to communicate with people. It was different than now. Now when I talk to people its like all friendly and stuff."

When you're dancing you also need to have like attitude and sassiness and all that, and I've kinda used that in my day to day stuff."

I don't really like to talk to people, but since I came here I've been able to talk to more people that I don't know."

- Young participants



In particular

You feel better about yourself cause all the coaches, even if you're no good and you're no doing that good, they still encourage you to do better, they always motivate you n stuff so you're always feeling a bit better about yourself."

- Young participant

Taking part in dance shows contributed to building confidence, with many seeing taking part in the shows as a major achievement that they wouldn't have previously been able to do.

Some young people mentioned that they were more open to doing new things, and had gone on to take up new sports activity, or go on to further learning opportunities.

It makes me feel like I can do more."

Before I came I was too scared to like try things out...but because of the environment and everyone supporting me, it just makes me feel more confident in myself."

- Young participants

EXAMPLE: FEELING ABLE TO TRY NEW THINGS



Before I started playing fitba, I was really shy, quite anti-social, I didn't like talking to new people, coz I was really shy.

But ever since I came here it just gave me a bit of confidence to talk to new people. And now I'm doing a course in college that is coaching. So it has helped me to speak in front of big groups and be confident in front of others.

Health and wellbeing

The numbers

Almost all young people felt that taking part in A CashBack Difference had made a difference to their health and wellbeing.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total (Average)
Young people report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI	100%	94%-100%	100%	99%
Stakeholders report increases in SHANARRI among young people	100%	100%	100%	100%

In Year 2, 94% of the young people who spoke with Research Scotland said that they felt improvements in their health and wellbeing. All (100%) of the 1,238 participants completing a survey for Achieve More Scotland said that they felt fitter as a result of taking part in the sessions.

It is important to recognise the significant challenges to mental and physical health during 2020 to 2022. In the context of restrictions on every day life and a continually changing public health environment, young people across Scotland (and the world) faced real issues with physical and mental health.

Views and experiences

Young people said that they really enjoyed the sessions with Achieve More Scotland, and that they felt happy, excited, free, good, calm, energised, motivated and determined when taking part.



"I'm just so happy to come here, it makes me feel so good."

- Young participant



Young people said that the activity sessions helped them to feel fitter, stronger and healthier. Some mentioned that the football sessions on large pitches, with back to back games meant that they were always running – which they weren't able to do on smaller pitches.



The weekly football has made me fitter and healthier. I feel much better."

When I started, I ran 5 minutes and I was exhausted and couldn't even run, but now I can run the whole matches."

- Young participants

Many young people mentioned that if they were not at A CashBack Difference sessions they would be doing sedentary activities like watching TV, sleeping, playing on their computer, being on their phone.



I feel a lot fitter and stronger because I have been able to take part. I don't know what I would have been doing at night if I couldn't come along to the club."

- Young participant

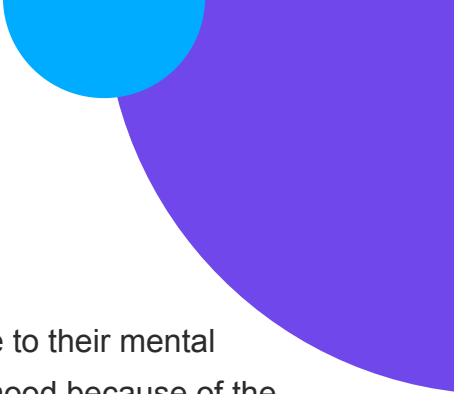
Some young people involved in the camp activities said that normally they wouldn't be active during the holidays, or wouldn't know what to do, so the activity helped to keep them doing something physical.



Because I wouldn't usually be active over the holidays, it gives me more of an opportunity to exercise."

- Young participant





Many young people said that the activities made a positive difference to their mental health and wellbeing. Young people talked about feeling in a better mood because of the activity, and feeling better able to manage their emotions. Many said that the activity took their mind off their problems or concerns.



I think it like gives us something to do, if I've had a bad week and I think about coming to dancing it puts me in a better mood."

I think, when you play football its another world. All the problems that you have - gone."

It cheers you up man...takes your mindset off so you can focus on the fitba. For me, I go through stress and stuff, so it kinda gets my mind off all that."

I feel brilliant, makes me get away from my problems at home."

Aye cause I'd say that if you're angry and you go and play a bit of football, it takes a bit of that anger oot."

- Young participants

Some said that the activity helped them to feel less stress, anxious or worried and to feel more motivated, positive and happy.



Aye coz you come doon, you could be angry when you come doon and it just leaves your heid, it clears the mind – it's like meditation..."

- Young participant



It stops me from stressing all the time about school."

I think it makes you a happier person. Like see if I wisnae feeling all right n I come here...I forget about everything."

- Young participants

A few mentioned particularly that they felt safe at Achieve More Scotland.



I like feel safe and nice and stuff, and there's food as well, and I enjoy it."

I feel good and I feel like I'm in a place where I'm safe."

I feel safe here."

- Young participants

Many of the young people said that a key reason for feeling safe and in a good mood at the sessions was because of the coaches. Young people could talk through any issues with the coaches, and seek advice and support.



I know like if I needed it, I could speak to any of the coaches. I always feel good coming here, I never feel annoyed or anything."

I enjoy it, coz I'm actually quite close to the coaches, and like if I've if I've got a problem, I'll talk to them about it."

- Young participants

School and learning

The numbers

Most of the young people involved in the evaluation felt that A CashBack Difference had made a difference to how they felt about school and learning. This included encouraging people to go to school, when A CashBack Difference activity was on, or building more of an enthusiasm for learning.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total (Average)
Young people improve attendance		67%*	42%	55%
Young people improve attainment		67%*	42%	55%

*Young people reporting that the project made a positive difference to how they felt about school and learning

Views and experiences

Most young people felt that the project had made a difference to how they felt about school and learning. Some felt it encouraged them to go to school more, enjoy school more and adopt a positive approach to learning.



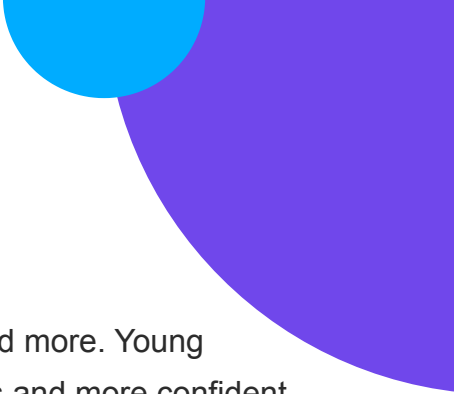
Yeah – when I go to school, I wanna go to school and join the football, so I don't want to miss anything."

Yeah it has, it helps you build that sort of learning mentality, going into classes and that just enjoying what you are learning... that's just what they do here, they make you enjoy everything."

Coz like the coaches teach you a lot, so I feel like I'm learning but having fun at the same time - and I just take that to school, especially if I know I've got football after school, I'm excited."

It's made me more dedicated to learning new things."

- Young participants



Some mentioned that they learned better at school now, and engaged more. Young people felt less stressed about learning, happier speaking up in class and more confident talking to peers and teachers and asking for help.



It will make me more relaxed about learning, make me concentrate more."

Yeah it helps me concentrate more."

In class I take part more."

It makes me feel more confident about school. It helps me to feel good about myself."

It makes me feel less worried about school."

- Young participants

A few young people specifically mentioned that taking part in activity through A CashBack Difference made a difference to how they felt about PE. A few saw PE at school more positively, and joined in more. One young person said he got involved in coaching primary school pupils in sport activities, because of being interested in this through his involvement with Achieve More Scotland.

A few young people said that attending activity at the high school through A CashBack Difference while they were at primary school helped them to get to know the school, and feel better about the transition to secondary school.

Some participants were at college. A few felt that the activity helped them to learn more effectively at college, but a few mentioned that they found the online learning system in place as a result of the pandemic a real barrier, and that the sessions hadn't really changed that for them.



Yeah, cause college can be on your mind and that's constantly playing, but see if you come here it's taken your mind off it for that wee bit of time... So you feel better about yourself cause you're not worrying about school or college."

- Young participant

EXAMPLE: ENGAGEMENT WITH LEARNING

One school involved in A CashBack Difference had a real issue with attendance. It wanted to create a breakfast club so that pupils can be in a trusted atmosphere, feel safe and be more likely to come to school.

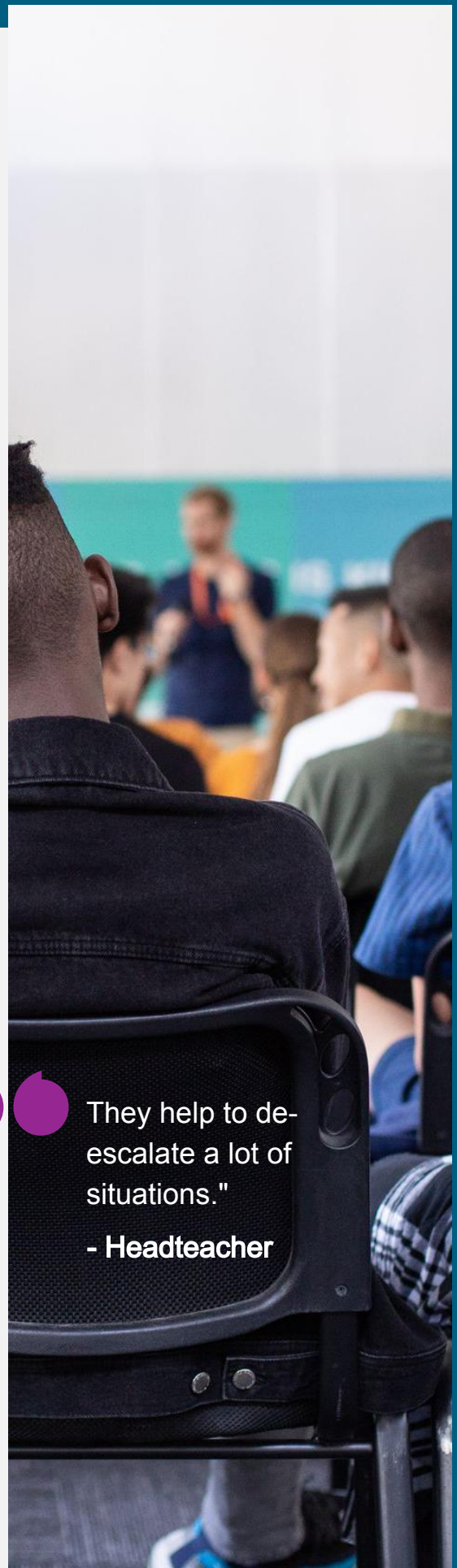
Achieve More Scotland runs the breakfast club from 8.10 to 8.45am, provides healthy food and then does a soft start and takes pupils to classes. During class time they work with small groups of children, taking small groups of pupils who need to develop specific skills, and they also run activities at play and lunchtime.

Although overall attendance at school is still inconsistent, and affected by the pandemic, the children who come in to the breakfast club are consistent.

The senior leadership team finds that problem behaviour has been reduced over play and lunch, as the children are in structured activities.

The senior management team feels the approach is positive, and there is a lot of peer moderation to calm the children down and deal with issues before they come to the management team. This helps to improve engagement with learning, and frees up the management team to deal with strategic issues at the school.

Children have also become better at making friends, and there is less fighting and arguing.



They help to de-escalate a lot of situations."

- Headteacher

EXAMPLE: ENGAGEMENT WITH LEARNING

A CashBack Difference is delivered in a primary school which uses a mix of time funded through CashBack and its Pupil Equity Funding to enhance the support given to children in unstructured times – at play and at lunch – and after school. The school contributes to 10 hours of support per week and A CashBack Difference contributes approximately 8 hours per week.

The school is in a catchment where a high proportion of children are from the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland. Working with Achieve More Scotland has helped to build a nurturing ethos within the school, enhancing positive role modelling and relationships, and building children's trust in adults.

The head teacher believes that support from Achieve More Scotland has made a big difference to young people's engagement with school and learning. Behaviour in the playground has improved with young people taking part in structured activities. Achieve More Scotland and the school have worked together to consult children on acceptable behaviour during football, and agree how to make play and lunch times better.

The structured play has made a big difference to how ready children are to learn after play and lunch times. Previously, there was a lot of bickering, fall outs and bullying in the playground, which resulted in problems in the afternoon. The management team often had to spend 2 hours working through the issues that had come up during play and lunch.

Having Achieve More Scotland supporting the work has meant that young people are more ready to learn, and issues are diffused. If pupils are more engaged in the afternoons, their attainment should improve over time.



There has been a huge increase in engagement with learning. Things are more settled at 1pm... Teachers can have a greater impact in the afternoons."

- Staff

Some pupils also have de-escalation time with Achieve More Scotland, movement time to burn energy, or positive role modelling time. Pupils have also become more active, and their health and wellbeing is improving. Overall, it has helped to build a calmer atmosphere in the school. Discussion with four pupils at the school found that young people feel Achieve More Scotland helps to resolve arguments, manage issues and help them to make friends. Young people also felt that AMS staff helped by chatting to the young people and help young people in the playground when they need it.



When people fight, they help calm it down."

- Pupil

Skill and employability

The numbers

Young people reported that they were developing their skills through A CashBack Difference.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total (Average)
Young people report their skills are increasing	92%	96%	86%	91%
Stakeholders report participant skills increasing	92%	100%	100%	97%
Young people achieve a positive destination (remain at school, training, learning)		928+	1,013	1,941
Young people engage in an activity agreement		45	13	58
Young people take part in training	51	52	541	644
Young people gain accreditation for learning and skills development	51	52	139	242

Due to the nature of A CashBack Difference as a drop in programme, it is not possible to monitor the destination of all participants. However, evidence shows that most of the young people A CashBack Difference engaged were still at school and continued their learning. Much of the activity was through schools, or related out of school, after school and holiday camp activity. Most - 55% - said that it had made a difference to how they feel about school and learning.

- At least 783 continued at school
- 45 young people aged 16 plus moved into employment as a direct result of engaging in the CashBack programme
- 57 young people engaged in volunteering, coaching or leading
- 82 took part in training and skills development activity.

Views and experiences

Many young people said that they had learned new things through A CashBack Difference. This included:

- social skills – talking to people, manners, maturity
- life skills – working as a team, decision making
- wellbeing skills – managing emotions, not getting angry, patience
- sporting skills – football, dance or cricket skills.



You learn how to be a better football player and a better person."

I'm more of a team player. Anything I've done, I'm more of a team player.."

- Young participants

A few also mentioned that they had learned how to look after their body, through warming up, stretching and cooling down. One young person had improved their English through talking to others at the sessions.

Young people who have participated in AMS activity over the years have also gained employment opportunities through A CashBack Difference. Achieve More Scotland has an ethos of supporting young people to lead and volunteer within dance and football sessions, supporting them to develop their employment skills.



EXAMPLE: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT ACHIEVE MORE SCOTLAND

Achieve More Scotland works with young people to offer volunteering, training and employment opportunities. As part of this, it offers young people a six month full time work placement through the Step Up programme for recent school leavers. The young people also undertake funded training activities, completing at least two training courses which are decided by Achieve More Scotland and the young person. While on a placement they also have mentoring support through Jobs and Business Glasgow, with 16 one hour one to one sessions.

This programme helps young people who have just left school, and are not job ready. The young people taking part are often very shy and reserved, and the main change that partners see is in relation to their communication skills – through the work placement and wider support activities.

Most of the young people who completed placements with Achieve More Scotland were kept on full time, to deliver A CashBack Difference activity and wider activities. Young people continue to receive support from Achieve More Scotland as they move into full time work.

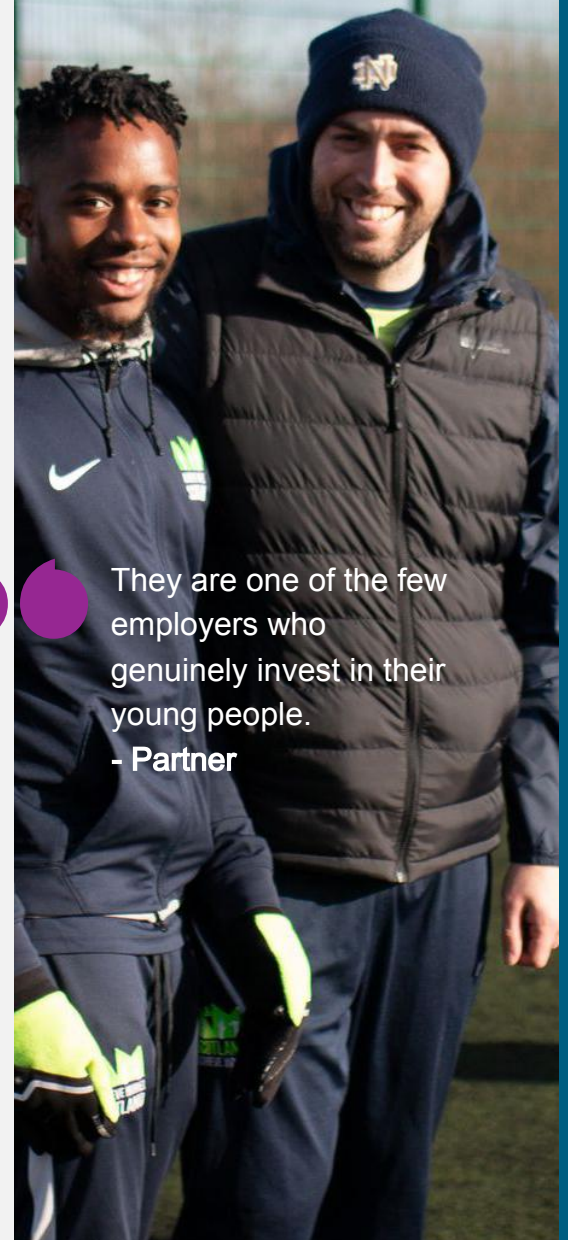
The placements also offer wider opportunities. For example, one primary school funded 50% of a young person's salary to keep him on after his placement ended.

I can't emphasise enough about the communication skills. When I initially speak to them on the phone, they are giving you one-word answers, which is to be expected at 16, but when I speak to them at the end of their placements, their communication skills are phenomenal. The experience of them working in a real environment is helping with that."

- Partner

They are one of the few employers who genuinely invest in their young people.

- Partner



Many of the young people who have started work at AMS through volunteering and training through A CashBack Difference started out as participants. Through taking part, engaging with the coaches and volunteering to lead some sessions or help at holiday camps, young people began to get interested in working as a coach.

Young people felt that there was a “family” feeling at AMS, which encouraged them to stay involved. A few said that they didn’t know what to do when they left school, but that through AMS they have developed a better idea of their career interests. Many mentioned that since being involved in the project, they would like to go on and be a coach or a teacher.



I think it's heading me in the right direction of where to go... I never really had that plan when I left school."

I'm much more happier working here than I was. If I could keep doing this forever I would."

- Young staff members

Young staff members felt that the training and support they received to perform their role was good, and felt confident delivering sessions and supporting play within schools. Many of the young people mentioned that they were shy, introverted or nervous at first, but through their volunteering, training and working at AMS their confidence had increased. Young people were pleased that they were mentored in their role at first, but soon grew on to lead and deliver sessions.



EXAMPLE: YOUNG STAFF

One young man got involved in AMS as a coach after taking part in the football sessions for years. He loves football so stayed involved.

I knew it would be a good place to work because we've had coaches and I've seen them all now, so they're like all supportive with the football training so I knew it would be good."

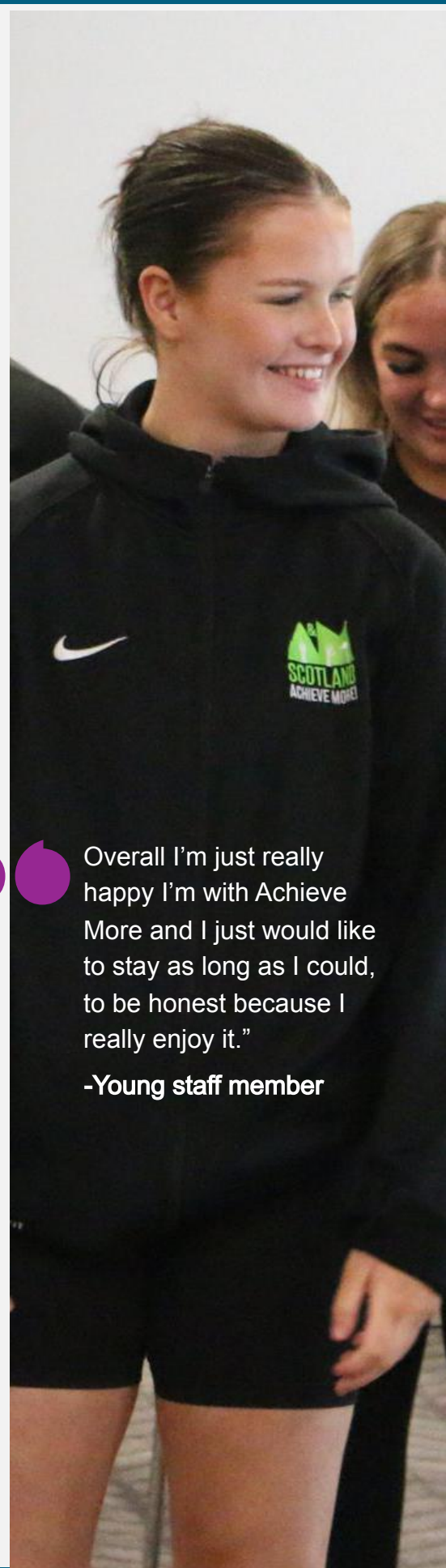
-Young staff member

Before getting involved with AMS, he hadn't really thought about working in sports or coaching, but as soon as he got involved he enjoyed it. The coaching was new to him, but he picked it up quickly, through working with coaches who had been with AMS for a long time. He runs football sessions in schools, in local neighbourhoods and inter-neighbourhood tournaments. He plays games with the kids and makes sure they are having fun.

This young man is really enjoying working for AMS. He feels he makes a big difference, and AMS provides young people with the chance to have fun, doing what they love, playing football and competing in positive way.

I love working with them because its built my confidence up and its mostly something I've always liked, working with kids, playing football with kids. It's good because I'm working in a school and it's just bringing up my skills, coaching."

-Young staff member



Overall I'm just really happy I'm with Achieve More and I just would like to stay as long as I could, to be honest because I really enjoy it."

-Young staff member

Community contribution

The numbers

In Year 1, it was not possible to measure the contribution that young people made to the community due to the severe restrictions in place. Due to these restrictions, young people were not able to support activity by volunteering, coaching or leading. Wider significant drops in anti-social behaviour and changes in patterns for young people leaving their homes were related to the restrictions and changes in behaviour due to the pandemic, rather than the activity of particular projects.

In Years 2 and 3, young people provided good evidence that A CashBack Difference helped to build a sense of community and increased motivation for young people to positively influence their community. Most young people indicated that as a result of A CashBack Difference they feel less inclined to participate in anti-social or criminal behaviour.

	Year 2	Year 3	Total (Average)
Young people volunteering, coaching or leading	48	119	167
Hours of volunteering contributed by participants	1,868	5,832	7,700
Community focused awards gained	52	92	144
Young people's perception of neighbourhood improves	84%	88%	86%
Young people have a heightened sense of belonging to a community	91%	97%	94%
Young people have increased motivation to positively influence community	61%-94%	88%	83%
Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour	86%	92%	89%
Other stakeholders perceive improvement in young people's contribution, links and interaction	100%	100%	100%
Other stakeholders report perceived reduction in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour	100%	100%	100%

More than 160 young people (167) volunteered during Years 2 and 3, dedicating 7,700 volunteer hours. Valuing this time at the living wage (£10.90 per hour) would suggest that this was a community contributing to the value of approximately **£83,930**.

Views and experiences

Young people said that overall A CashBack Difference helps them to feel part of something and to get along with other people. Many were very positive that something good was happening in their area, because of A CashBack Difference. Many said that there weren't many other organisations delivering activities for young people in their area, and this helped them to feel good about their neighbourhood and proud of their community.

Doing team and group activities, like football and dancing, also helped people to feel part of something and to get along with other people. Some of the older young people said that they felt part of a group of people leading, and supporting the younger ones, and felt part of a community. A few young people said it feels like a big family.



I learned how to be more responsible coz I'm one of the olders now and the little ones look up to me so I need to act appropriately."

- Young participant

Many young people talked about the difference that the project made to their risk taking, decision making and choices in terms of behaviour in the local area.



Coming to this makes you do good choices and keeps you out of trouble."

Oh yeah changed my behaviour for the good, because it's directing me into a different part of life if you know what I mean."

Yeah - it's made me be a better person and it's made me think more before I act to do something bad."

It makes me be like more mature and like I've got to watch what I do and be a little more respectful in what I do."

- Young participants



You get to come here...get to have a good time, it gets you oot the house for a while. It stops you fae just doin stupid things, like going out and getting drunk or something...."

- Young participant

Many highlighted that the Achieve More Scotland coaches helped them to make better decisions. A few said that it helped them to make better choices both on and off the pitch, and to become more mature.



Aye, they really do help you, they're easy to talk to and when you need help with something they help you make the right decision."

I feel like it's just the coaches influences to make better choices."

...people our age are out drinking and all that, but like talking to them, they're [the coaches] always encouraging us not to do that and they always like speak to you about stuff because they've experienced it."

I'm no as rash as I used to be."

100% keeps you off the streets."

- Young participants

Others talked about the difference the project made to their friends and family members, and the value of activity like A CashBack Difference in supporting young people to stay away from crime and anti-social behaviour.



I can tell you know that my brothers would be out causing bother if they weren't at the football. The coaches keep them in place and I can even see a difference in them at home now."

CashBack should be used to help as many people stay away from crime and trouble with the police as it can. I definitely think things like football and youth clubs help. A lot of my friends don't have dreams and have problems at home."

Youth clubs, football and helping people to get a job are what helps me and the people I know. This is the stuff that gets you out the house and keeps you out of trouble."

- Young participants

Young people also felt that the project helped to connect different areas in a positive way, with young people becoming friends and not fighting between neighbourhoods. A few also felt that A CashBack Difference helped to give their area a better name, by being out, meeting other people and being involved.



You get to meet new people an all, while you're playin' football. We're all from all different schemes but there's no fighting an all that."

Our area it kind of gets a bad name and we're giving it a good name. We're not perfect, don't get me wrong, but we try our best."

- Young participants

4

Learning during 2020 to 2023

Learning about young people's views

The young people interviewed for this evaluation said that they really enjoyed and loved the A CashBack Difference activities. Participants said that they felt happy, excited, fun and safe when attending the sessions. Most said there was nothing that could be better.



I can't mention one thing what I don't like about this. I've came every single week."

- Young participant

The main reason they felt the activity was enjoyable and valuable was the Achieve More Scotland coaches. Young people felt that the coaches were kind, helpful and respectful. Young people saw the coaches as role models to them.



The dancing is great and the coaches are fantastic. I think the coaches are the main reason why the club is so busy. They always help you."

It's mobbed because the coaches are great, its football that everyone wants and it's free."

It's good fun and all the coaches are nice... You get a good laugh with them."

- Young participants

Most young people mentioned how supportive the coaches were, and that talking to the coaches was an important part of the activities. Young people valued the relationships they had built with coaches, and felt that they were supportive and encouraging both in terms of the physical activities, and in terms of wider life experiences and decisions.

“The conversations with the coaches and stuff, it’s like about conversations and not just about dance all the time.”

...they’re really encouraging with you.”

I like to see my friends and play games, and also like laugh at stuff, and talk to the coaches...most of all of them are very nice and easy to talk and that and funny too.”

- Young participants



Young people also said that it was a good atmosphere, with peers and coaches being respectful, supportive and kind. Young people felt it as a safe space to come to.

Since I came here, everybody's respected, everybody.”

I just kinda feel that it's an escape place... like I don't feel really stressed here or anything.”

- Young participants

Many mentioned that it was important to them that the activity was local, as it was easily accessible for them. The young people involved in travelling for Friday night football activities valued the provision of transport, and felt that it was very well organised. The fact that the activity was free helped young people to take part, and young people valued the wider practical support provided in terms of food.

I like that we have an opportunity to come and play football, like without paying or anything. And they also provide like lunch and breakfast and that's really good.”

- Young participant

The one area for improvement identified by a few young people was that the age range for dancing was quite wide (10 to 16) and some of the older ones found this frustrating when doing group dances, due to varied ability and concentration.



Learning through the pandemic

The restrictions in place during 2020 and 2021 had a significant impact on A CashBack Difference. Group activity was restricted for much of the time, and venues have been closed or more challenging to access. Achieve More Scotland worked through these challenges, tried different approaches and learned from these. Key lessons learned include:

→ The importance of a community presence

In the early stages of the pandemic, Achieve More Scotland used CashBack funding, and other funding, to deliver food parcels and vouchers to thousands of people in 7 targeted communities across Glasgow and North Lanarkshire. This service of food parcel delivery allowed Achieve More Scotland to continue to engage with children, young people and families in targeted areas where Cashback projects would ultimately be delivered. Having a presence and being in the communities helped to build trust, and for families to see Achieve More Scotland as a source of support and a valued community organisation.

→ Face-to-face activity

During the pandemic, some activity was shifted online. This was a necessity when suitable community locations could not be found or restrictions meant groups could not come together. However, Achieve More Scotland found that all young people preferred face-to-face activity to online. Many also faced digital exclusion, with a third saying they didn't have access to the internet at home. A CashBack Difference therefore shifted back to face-to-face delivery as soon as possible.



We have had a constant physical presence in these communities. The physical presence is so important, and we have maintained contact.”

- Staff member

→ Practical support

The pandemic strengthened the evidence about the value of providing food and wider practical support for families, alongside physical activity opportunities. Families valued this support, and it was necessary to ensure children and young people had access to food, particularly during holiday periods.

Learning about delivery

More widely, Achieve More Scotland also reflected on what was important about the way in which its activities were delivered. Key messages included:

- Programme delivery has focused on diversion from crime and antisocial behaviour, with attractive evening activity provided for young people at times when diversion is most needed – such as Friday evenings.
- A community embedded approach, based on building up trust over many years, among families and across generations has helped to engage people.
- Having a young staff team, with most drawn from former participants, was key to success. Almost all staff were programme participants prior to their employment, and the approach helped to create pathways to positive destinations.
- Work in primary schools, initially in response to Covid regulations and challenges, has been a significant source of learning and insight. It has allowed AMS to engage with people at a younger age, before they formed habits as young adults. During the course of Phase 5, primary schools have become key partners.



- The cost of living crisis has had an impact in increasing demand for AMS services. Free, attractive activities in trusted local settings are in high demand, and families regularly ask for more activity sessions each week.
- Expanding the programme to include cycling, boxing, tennis and cricket, as well as football and dance, has been successful in engaging a range of participants.



Face-to-face engagement with young people at community level to divert them away from crime and antisocial behaviour - that's our bread and butter.”

If you're getting the kids at 11 or 12 there's much more chance of you managing to change long term behaviours before they get to the big bad world of secondary school, or before they get involved in smashing a bus stop or carrying a knife.”

- Staff members

Learning about working in partnership

A CashBack Difference has involved very close work with schools. Originally, the project wasn't going to involve work in schools. However, due to the pandemic and many venues being closed, Achieve More Scotland agreed with Inspiring Scotland that it could connect A CashBack Difference up with its existing work in schools, to expand this, and to reach out to new schools. This has worked particularly well, and may not have developed in this way without the emergence of the pandemic.



We enhanced and developed new and existing partnerships with schools.”

- Partner



A CashBack Difference also involved work with a wide and growing network of partners including sports governing bodies, sports teams, voluntary organisations, employability teams and businesses.

Partners enjoyed working with Achieve More Scotland, felt that their work was valuable, felt that their approach was adaptable, flexible and supportive, and were keen to continue working in partnership.



I'm really positive about them. I think what they do is brilliant! I want to keep working with them for a long time. How they work with young people is so valuable and should be recognised more."

- Partner

Partners talked about the importance of the relationship-based approach that Achieve More Scotland staff take, in engaging and supporting young people. Partners felt that staff were very good at building up trust and relationships with the young people.

Partners praised the passion of the AMS team, and felt that a key part of their success was that they treat the young people with respect and nurture them to achieve their potential.



What works best is their attitude with the kids. They are amazing, very caring, loving and always welcoming... They know the name of each and every one of the children."

- Partner

Partners also mentioned the value of the practical support Achieve More Scotland provided to families, through food vouchers and food packages during the pandemic.



“They inject confidence in the kids.”

The support Achieve More Scotland gives is unbelievable.”

- Partners

Partners also felt it was valuable that the young participants were offered the opportunity to train, earn a living and support themselves into work or further learning. Partners highlighted that these young people had often not flourished in the education system, but through AMS are able to move on to learning or sustained employment.

One partner said that it would be nice to see more diversity in the workforce in terms of gender, and more diversity of activity with female staff members coaching a range of different sports beyond dancing.



“Achieve More Scotland are willing to work with the most vulnerable groups...not just support the most vulnerable groups by delivering the likes of their after school activities, and their summer camps etc., but giving those young people the opportunity to earn a wage and develop and support them.”

- Partner

EXAMPLE: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Achieve More Scotland works in partnership with Glasgow Kelvin College to support young staff through certificates in Youth Work Practice, PDA in Youth Work and an HNC in Community Work. Many staff and volunteers have undertaken further education at the college. AMS also supports delivery of qualifications such as the college's youth access programme, which is an evening and weekend youth work programme. The college also supports wider learning for AMS around team building, engaging with young people, safeguarding, management and leadership.



It's a solid relationship, it's a really positive working relationship...they're proactive in their staff development and they very much see us as being the provider of so much of their staff development and I think that's what makes it such a solid partnership."



EXAMPLE: PARTNERSHIP WITH WICKETZ

The Wicketz programme is run by Cricket Scotland and Lord's Taverners. Wicketz is a cricket programme aimed at young people living in areas with high levels of poverty, providing cricket sessions and life skills workshops. Wicketz has been involved in delivering summer camp sessions within A CashBack Difference.

Interested young people were encouraged to sign up to Wicketz sessions, and there is a group of young people who signed up and have stayed involved for a year so far.



Through AMS many kids have joined up and continued their journey with Wicketz.”

- Partner

This partnership has helped Wicketz to reach new geographical areas, and spread their work further across Glasgow.



Learning about profile

Staff felt that the children and young people involved in AMS activity were representative of their target areas. All were from the most deprived 10% areas in Scotland, and participants had a diverse range of ethnic identities. Having a diverse, multilingual staff and volunteer team, many of whom are from the local community, was felt to be a key factor in attracting people from a wide range of communities.

Staff highlighted that a higher proportion of volunteers were girls, while a higher proportion of participants were boys. A number of young women have been interested in volunteer coaching as a path for development, while many of the young men have wished to continue participating.



Learning about evaluation of a CashBack Difference

The evaluation of A CashBack Difference focused strongly on face to face fieldwork with young people and young staff members. Instead of using a written or online survey, a face to face survey was used. This included simplified measurements for CashBack outcomes, and allowed participants to respond using thumbs up, middle or down responses for some questions, as well as responding to open ended questions.

These discussions gathered valuable information, including statistically significant survey information and richer qualitative evidence. The approach also reduced barriers to participation in the evaluation, through accessing young people at the A CashBack Difference sessions, and not requiring any written or online participation.



Appendix 1: Progress Against Targets

	Target Phase 5	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Measurement
Overall number of participants	3,000	573	1,171	1,354	3,098	AMS Records
Outcome 1: Confidence and resilience						
Young people report confidence increasing	80%	100%	82%	88%	90%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Young people report being able to do new things	80%	97%	83%	86%	89%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Young people feel more resilient	80%	97%*	91%	92%	93%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Young people report positive supportive networks	80%	100%	86%	100%	95%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Young people report positive changes in their behaviour	80%	97%*	81%	92%	90%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Stakeholders report perceived positive changes behaviour	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Phone survey
Stakeholders report increased confidence and resilience of young participants	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Phone survey

*97% felt happier

	Target Phase 5	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Measurement
Outcome 2: Physical and personal skills						
Young people gain accreditation for learning and skills development	10% 300	51	52	139	242	AMS records
Young people report their skills are increasing	70%	92%	96%	86%	91%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Stakeholders report participant skills increasing	70%	92%	100%	100%	97%	Phone survey
Outcome 3: Health and wellbeing						
Young people report increases in wellbeing feelings against SHANARRI	70%	100%	94-100%	100%	99%	Face-to-face participant survey AMS records
Stakeholders report increases in SHANARRI among young people	70%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Phone survey
Outcome 4: Learning, employability and options						
Young people achieve a positive destination (remain at school, training or learning)	50%		928+ 79%	1,013 75%	1,941 63%	AMS records
Young people engage in an activity agreement	20		45	13	58	AMS records
Young people take part in training	300	51	52	541	644	AMS records
Young people improve attendance	50%		67%	42%	55%	Qualitative work with schools and pupil case studies
Young people improve attainment	25%		67%	42%	55%	Qualitative work with schools and pupil case studies

	Target Phase 5	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Measurement
Outcome 5: Community contribution						
Young people volunteering, coaching or leading	10% 300		48	119	167	AMS records
Hours of volunteering contributed by participants	10,000 hours		1,868	5,832	7,700	AMS records
Community focused awards achieved	250 8%		52	92	144	AMS records
Young people's perception of neighbourhood improves	60%		84%	88%	86%	Face-to-face participant survey
Young people have a heightened sense of belonging to a community	10%		91%	97%	94%	Face-to-face participant survey
Young people have increased motivation to positively influence community	60%		61-94%	88%	83%	Face-to-face participant survey
Other stakeholders perceive improvement in young people's contribution, links and interaction	60%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Phone survey

	Target Phase 5	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Measurement
Long term outcome: Diversion from involvement in the justice system						
Young people feel less inclined to participate in anti-social and/or criminal behaviour	50%		86%	92%	89%	Face-to-face participant survey
Other stakeholders report perceived reduced anti-social and/or criminal behaviour	50%		100%	100%	100%	Phone survey

Note: Based on responses to the face-to-face survey, we can be 95% sure that the answers for the wider group of participants in Years 2 and 3 would be within 10% +/- the responses given by the 100 young people taking part in the survey. Confidence level is 95%, confidence interval is 10.

AMS survey is also statistically significant, involving discussions with 1,238 participants.

Appendix 2: Method

Across Phase 5 (2020 to 2023) this evaluation involved:

→ **Face-to-face interviews with young people**

We attended football and dance sessions and camps, and conducted a semi-structured interview and survey with 169 young people. This is considerably above our target of speaking with 120 young people and was achieved through strong joint working with the AMS team.

We also held four in-depth discussions with pupils at one primary school who had participated in A CashBack Difference activity while at school.

→ **Face-to-face interviews with young staff members**

We held 12 individual interviews with young people who worked for A CashBack Difference. These interviews were held at Achieve More Scotland offices or during session visits.

→ **Stakeholder interviews**

We held online or phone interviews with eight individuals from seven stakeholders, including schools and third sector organisations.