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Introduction

The team experienced some staffing changes across the 2021/22 academic year, at the time of writing the Active Schools team was made up of the following staff members:

Roy McPherson

Principal Active Schools and Community Sport Officer

Danny Simpson

Buckie (Primaries and Secondary)

Craig Rowley

Elgin High Primaries
Elgin High and Elgin Academy

Position Vacant

Elgin Academy Primaries

Paul Rogan and Rosalyn Carruthers

Forres (Primaries and Secondary)

Fraser Lyall

Lossiemouth (Primaries and Secondary)

Lorna Young

Milnes (Primaries and Secondary)

Craig Carswell

Speyside (Primaries and Secondary)

Amanda Walker

Keith (Primaries and Secondary)

Background

Active Schools is a successful partnership between sportscotland and Local Authorities that has been in operation since 2003, just short of twenty years. The aim of Active Schools is to provide high quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school while developing effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. A key role is also to develop a network of volunteers to deliver activity sessions. The work is guided nationally by the sportscotland 'Sport for Life' strategy and the infographic displayed below highlights the key areas of participation, people and profile.

The commitment from sportscotland to ensure that 'inclusion underpins everything we do' emphasises the importance of this area and has resulted in a more focused approach to targeted programmes delivered via the Moray team. This report will celebrate the success of key initiatives led by the Moray Active Schools Team across 2021/22, highlighting the blend of universal and targeted projects delivered, striving to ensure that sport and physical activity is accessible to all young people in Moray.



Source: sportscotland

At the beginning of the 21/22 academic year tight Covid-19 restrictions were still in place across schools, which continued to make organising activities and developing connections difficult. As the restrictions began to loosen off in early 2022 the team were able to return to more familiar ways of working that accelerated progress. The main priorities across the year were to build up the extra-curricular programme, increase the volunteer workforce while re-introducing events and festivals. The Young Leaders programme was one element of work that has progressed over the pandemic period and continuing to strengthen this was another priority.

Participation – universal initiatives

The figures below demonstrate that despite the issues relating to the pandemic, the Moray Active Schools team were able to make a positive impact across the area:

Number of visits:
62,831

Number of participants:
3,218

Percentage of school roll:
26%

Number of sessions:
3,227

Number of deliverers:
335

Percentage of whom are voluntary:
91%

2021/22 data reflects the return to activity following Covid-19 pandemic. As extra-curricular sport and physical activity return, there is a recognition that recovery has been challenging and is at different stages across the country.

The figures above highlight some of the key accomplishments across 2021/22, with 3,227 extracurricular sessions being delivered in Moray with a total of 62,831 individual visits to these sessions. In total, 3,218 school pupils attended at least one block of sessions, which equates to 26% of the total school roll. A deeper delve into the stats show that 34% of primary school pupils participated, with 17% of secondary schools pupils taking part.

Statistics were also reported on the involvement of young people with protected characteristics across Moray schools. Of the total 3,218 participants, 1,801 had access to free school meals, with 74 being from a SIMD 1 or 2 area. There were also 1,119 pupils involved categorised as having an additional support need, with 104 assessed as disabled. Lastly, 120

young people that participated were recognised as being from an ethnic minority family.

The team continued re-developing extracurricular activity levels, club links, volunteer's numbers, re-establishing festivals and events while also developing targeted programmes with a Changing Lives approach. Some of the key universal events and games programmes that were delivered included:

- Primary Schools Cross Country Event: 600 participants, 1500 spectators
- Primary Schools Football Games Programmes: delivered in partnership with Scottish Football Association: over 400 participants across 60 teams, playing every second week
- 5 Primary School Cricket Festivals: delivered in partnership with Moray Cricket Association
- Forres ASG Rugby Festival: 7 schools teams, 66 primary school participants
- Keith ASG Hockey Festival: 80 participants from 3 primary schools

The remit of the Active Schools team is to deliver programmes during the school term time. However since the cessation of the Moray Sports Development Officer role in 2018, the Active Schools team have taken on the additional workload of co-ordinating local holiday programmes. After accessing an allocation of the Moray Council Scottish Government funding the team successfully delivered an extensive summer programme for 2022. Some of the key stats included:

Participants:

1,554

Participants from families with targeted characteristics:

214

Equality, inclusion and diversity – targeted initiatives

The Active Schools initiative contributes toward priorities in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People services plan. One key action allocated to the team via the Moray Council 'Education, Resources and Communities' service plan is to 'embed the Changing Lives approach across relevant sport and culture work streams'. The Changing Lives initiative encourages sport and physical activity to be used as an intentional tool to create positive social change for targeted groups, achieving both increased participation and wider social outcomes as a result. Two of the team completed the Changing Lives champions training in 2022 and workshops were delivered to the Active Schools Co-ordinators to upskill them on the tools such as the 'Theory of Change' planning template. It has provided the team with a more focussed approach on tackling inequalities locally, using sport and physical activity as a catalyst. The team had a third member accepted onto the champions programme for 2022/23. The report will now provide some examples of targeted projects that had a positive impact across 21/22:



Nurture Group

Nurture Group sessions in the Buckie ASG (associated school group) focused on small groups of pupils who were identified as having low selfesteem and found it hard to form friendships with their peers. A block of sessions were delivered that allowed pupils to work in small groups, trying out a variety of new sports and activities. The sessions focused heavily on teamwork, confidence building and perseverance. The sessions led to improved social skills such as listening, turn-taking and an enhanced self-esteem. The school also found that the pupils displayed improved behaviour, engagement and attitude in the classroom. From the first group of pupils that attended the sessions, two out of the six pupils began attending extra-curricular Active Schools clubs as a result of the programme, they had previously never attended.

Embodied Learning Programme

The Forres Active Schools team worked with local dance therapists to deliver an 'Embodied Learning Programme (ELP)' for primary 6s with additional support needs. One of the focuses was to support young people to integrate their personal/collective experiences of Covid-19 within a 'Dance Movement Therapy Framework'. This created opportunities to reflect upon and integrate their personal stories of the pandemic. Feedback from a head teacher included: "Engagement and confidence has increased for all pupils. One particular success was for one of our ASN pupils with Autism being free to express themselves. Seeing the joy on his face was quite magical"

Swimming Skills for ASN

The Lossiemouth Active Schools Coordinator linked in with a local group working with children with addition support needs. Water based sessions were delivered in a local pool building on swimming skills and paddle boarding technique. The group targeted children from P6-S6 and expanded from two volunteers and four children to six children and six volunteers. The aim of the sessions were to support and improve access to local opportunities, enhancing participant's ability to lead the life they choose and reduce isolation.

7Up Club

A transition '7Up Club' was delivered in the Milnes area via a partnership involving Active Schools, and Youth Work for primary 7s. A mixture of STEM, Arts and Crafts and sporting activities gave the P7s a chance to see some of their new school, meet new friends, have fun, and ease transition into secondary school. A parent commented that — "My daughter has felt quite a sense of trepidation in moving up to the High School, and this has helped to ease that fear."

The team strengthened links with the locality networks, in particular the social work team, which raised profile amongst professionals that work with targeted groups. A new system was trialled for the 2022 summer programme which allowed priority booking opportunities for families involved with social workers, enabling disadvantaged families to be targeted more efficiently.

A survey was sent to the targeted families that participated in the summer programme. Some of the quotes from the responses are listed below:

- 'My son made a friend which is nice as he struggles at school.'
- 'Really supportive approach by the tennis partners to ensuring that small adjustments allowed participation and inclusivity of children with additional needs. Was very much appreciated.'
- 'Helped my son grow confidence with sports and socialising with new children'
- 'My child has now found a new activity she enjoys and has joined the club'
- 'My son has been asking to go out and play with his basketball/football since doing the sessions which is great in comparison to only ever asking to watch TV/play video games.'
- 'My daughter has a few health issues and she loves going for the fun and games and meeting new friends'

#SPORTFORALL

"I liked playing cricket with David, it was fun and made me happier coming to school. It made me want to try out other sports"

-pupil, Buckie ASG

#SPORTFORALL

"The Nurture Group sessions have had an extremely positive impact. They have helped develop their social skills, such as listening, sharing, turn-taking, and boosted their self-esteem.

"It has also had a beneficial effect on their behaviour and attitude in the classroom. They have become more confident and been able to build relationships and gain trust. Their listening and concentration skills have improved so they are more focused on tasks and enjoy being part of the class.

"Within the school and the community, their behavioural, social, and emotional skills have improved and they enjoy participating in lunch time football games with classmates. They talk fondly of the Active School after school clubs that they attend too."

-teacher, Buckie ASG



People

The team were able to deliver the initiatives described above thanks to building up a strong and dedicated workforce. The Active Schools Coordinators regularly worked with school staff, young leaders, parent volunteers, college students, community sport club coaches and community volunteers to offer a range of different activities across the area. In total, 335 deliverers worked with the team across 2021/22, with 91% of the programme being delivered via volunteers. The statistics for the Active Schools programme across Scotland show that 88% of the deliverers were volunteers, demonstrating that the Moray team were ahead of the national average and in a strong position to deliver on the expectation that all sessions are free to participants.

The Young Leaders programme was one element of work that progressed significantly over the pandemic period with 131 young people helping to make up the workforce. The team successfully sourced £20k of funding from four external sources to support the initiative. This funding was obtained to increase the number of coach education courses available to young leaders, and also support the purchase of hoodies which are provided to the deliverers.

Deliverables by type:

Secondary School Pupils:

131

Family Members:

60

Club Coaches:

55

FE/HE Students:

44

Teachers:

28

Community Members:

25

Session Coaches:

10

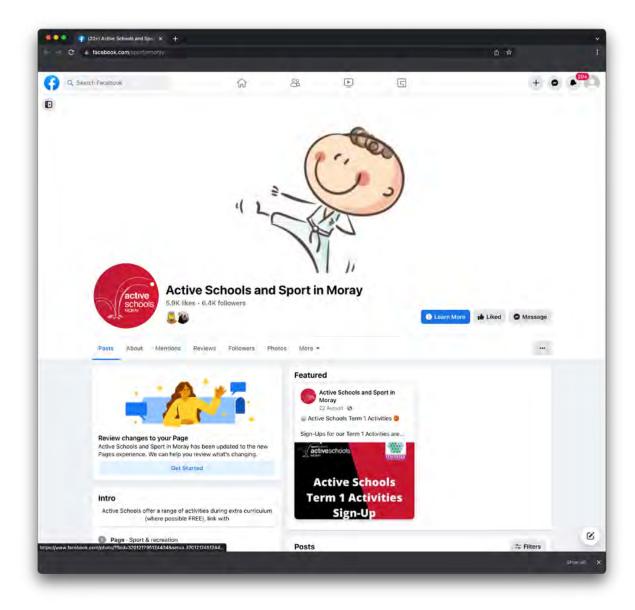
Others:

4

Profile

The team continued to build up their online presence across various social media platforms. The Active Schools and Sport in Moray Facebook page has amassed 6,400 followers providing an effective means of communication for families, individuals and external partners. The Facebook page has recently been used as an example of best practice by Moray Council communications staff when delivering workshops for internal teams. Nothing illustrates the range of programmes delivered via the team better than our Facebook page:





Collaboration and clubs

Twenty-eight community sport clubs linked with local schools via the Active Schools team across 2021/22, with every school in Moray achieving at least 1 club link and some recording up to 24. Links were created via taster sessions, regular extra-curricular activity and club representatives supporting festivals. As the pandemic restrictions loosened clubs were supported via the Active Schools and Community Sport team through the offer of coach education courses. One highlight included 20 local coaches attending a Scottish Disability Sport 'Disability Inclusion Training' practical workshop in Elgin.

Number of school to club links by activity:





Karate:
6
Lawn Bowls:
6
Running:
5
Fencing:
4
Orienteering:
4
Cricket:
3
Tennis:
3

Next steps

The 2021/22 stats show that the Moray programme involved 26% of the local school roll, compared to the national stats of 31%. The Moray team will work towards getting closer to the National average across 2022-23. The stats also suggest that the males have returned to sessions quicker than females after the pandemic. Plans will be progressed to address this through re-starting competitive Netball opportunities while also working with young leaders to establish dance sessions. The re-launch of the national school sport award will also a tool to increase engagement at schools that are targeted for increased engagement.

The team organised and led a PEPAS Inclusion meeting in April 2022 which had a Disability Sport focus. The lack of local provision for this target group was discussed at the meeting and the team are planning East and West ASN programmes with external partners to be delivered in the next academic year.

Action for Children and Moray Council have recently launched a Sonas project which aims to improve the mental health of school children across the area through targeted interventions. The Active Schools team have connected in with the project and the plan is for the local Sonas practitioners to work closely with the ASCs to strengthen pathways into sport and physical activity for the individuals they're working with.

Due to the changing landscape of the NGB workforce in the North area the team are also planning to set up a 'speed dating' style event to re-connect in with NGB representatives early in the next academic year. This will be an opportunity to discuss opportunities for training, events and other partnership opportunities.

