
Non-protected

Active Schools EQIA

Sport for life

sportscotland
the national agency for sport

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the approach and findings of the review of the Active Schools EQIA.

At **sportscotland**, equality impact assessments (EQIAs) help us identify and understand the equality impact of our work. An EQIA helps us identify actions we can take to help mitigate against negative effects and enhance positive effects of our work.

This review evaluates new evidence and learning since the Active Schools EQIA was first completed in October 2016. This EQIA review is the first step in a new continuous cycle of evaluating what **sportscotland** can improve and how we can embed equalities and inclusion into the Active Schools Programme.

Scope

sportscotland works in partnership with all 32 local authorities to invest in and support the Active Schools Network. The Network consists of over 400 Active Schools Coordinators (ASCs) and Active Schools Managers (ASMs) dedicated to developing and supporting the delivery of quality sporting opportunities for children and young people.

The EQIA project group agreed to set the scope of the EQIA review on actions that will support the Active Schools Network to make inclusive decisions.

Actions created from the EQIA should be strategic and proportionate.

EQIA Background

Legislative context

The three aims of the Equality Act 2010 provide the starting point for assessing impact. As a public body, we must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

EQIAs are part of our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. We must:

- assess the impact of our work against the general equality duty.
- consider relevant evidence about people who share a protected characteristic.
- use results of the assessment to inform our work.
- publish the results of any assessment.
- review assessments on an ongoing basis or when our work changes.

Strategic context

Within our corporate strategy, Sport For Life, our [commitment to inclusion](#) underpins everything we do. It is about valuing all individuals, giving equal access and opportunity to all and removing discrimination and other barriers to involvement. EQIAs are a tool we can use to help us deliver this commitment.

About the Policy

Active Schools aims to provide more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school, and to develop effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community. It provides opportunities for children and young people to get involved and stay involved in sport.

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Active Schools teams are employed and managed by either the local authority or associated Leisure Trust, this is determined by each local authority in consultation with **sportscotland**. Each Active Schools coordinator works with a group of schools and works closely with head teachers, school staff, PE staff and pupils to develop sport in the school. Active Schools coordinators recruit, retain and support volunteers, coaches, and young leaders to deliver opportunities in schools.

Evidence Review

The evidence review provides that there are clear challenges for children and young people with protected characteristics and their equitable access to sport and physical activity. We recognise the intersectional diversity and the disproportionate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children and young people with protected characteristics.

In addition to understanding the evidence it is important to recognise that each Active Schools team, and coordinator, will be working with a pupil population that has a unique equalities profile.

Research and Evaluation

Schools and Education Wider Evaluation 2018¹

- Active Schools was largely seen to provide inclusive opportunities which were accessible to a range of young people however it was recommended that there is scope for more focused and targeted activity.
- Teachers felt that Active Schools provided inclusive and wide-ranging opportunities which increased the participation of young people in sport and physical activity, including non-sporty pupils. Teachers also largely felt that Active Schools work responded to the needs of schools and pupils, taking targeted approaches as required – for example for girls or young people with additional support needs.
- The Active Schools network of staff is also providing a key role in holding together the range of **sportscotland** supported programmes in the schools and education environment and creating a real sense of a blend of support.

Equality and Sport Research 2020²

- **sportscotland** should support, inform and provide a mechanism for more systematic peer to peer learning and knowledge exchange. It should capture the strong practice out there in the Scottish sport sector more effectively. Knowledge and confidence in addressing different equality issues is highly variable and those with greater expertise should be supported to play a more proactive role in helping others.
- **sportscotland** should play a greater leadership role in emphasising the importance of equality. This relates both to communication – being seen to champion equality but also to ‘living’ the values. This should include leading by example, communicating clearly about its importance and providing resources and support.

Disability

¹ Research Scotland (2018). Available via: [Evaluation of sportscotland's work in 'schools and education' environment](#)

² Councel Limited (2020). Equality and Sport Research 2020. Available via: [Equality and Sport Research 2020 \(sportscotland.org.uk\)](#)

- 2.6% of all pupils (18,465) in Scotland are assessed/declared disabled. Breaking that down 1.7% female pupil population and 3.5% male pupil population were assessed/declared disabled in 2019³.
- Children and young people with a disability or long-term health condition are more likely to be less active than those without.⁴
- 10% of pupils in the ASOF survey said they were disabled; this includes additional support needs⁵. 30% of the school role in Scotland have additional support needs (require additional support to access education)⁶.
- The cost of raising a disabled child is estimated as being up to three times more expensive than that of raising a child without a disability. For almost a quarter of families with disabled children (24 per cent), extra costs amount to over £1,000 per month⁷.
- There is a strong correlation between Additional Support Needs and disabled pupils and those living within areas of multiple deprivation. 15% of pupils who live in the most deprived areas of Scotland (SIMD decile one) are assessed or declared disabled compared to 7% from the least deprived areas (SIMD decile 10)⁸.

Age

- In 2019, just over two-thirds (69%) of children aged 2-15 were physically active at the recommended level (including activity at school); This was a significant decrease compared with Scottish Health Survey 2016 (76%) and the lowest in the time series with figures previously fluctuating between 70% and 76%.⁹
- In 2019, two-thirds of all children aged 2-15 had participated in any sport in the week prior to interview (66%). Levels of participation in sport remained very similar to those last reported in 2017 where 67% of all children had participated in any sport in the last week. Participation in sport varied by age in 2019 increasing from 52% of those aged 2-4 to 71 - 78% of those aged 5-12 before decreasing to 60% among those aged 13-15. Similar patterns were recorded for both boys and girls.¹⁰

³ Scottish Government (2019). Available via: [Summary statistics for schools in Scotland no. 10: 2019 edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-for-schools-in-scotland-no-10-2019-edition/pages/10.aspx)

⁴ Sport England (2019). [Latest activity figures on children and young people published | Sport England](https://www.sportengland.org/active-figures)

⁵ **sports**scotland ASOF Schools Survey (2020). Available via: [sports-scotland's contribution to the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework](https://www.sports-scotland.org/active-scotland-outcomes-framework)

⁶ Scottish Government (2019).

⁷ SCOPE (2019) The Disability Price Tag 2019 Policy report. Available via: [Disability Price Tag | Disability charity Scope UK](https://www.scopeuk.org/disability-price-tag)

⁸ Scottish Government (2019) Pupil Census. Available via: [Early learning and childcare statistics - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/early-learning-and-childcare-statistics/pages/10.aspx)

⁹ Scottish Government (2019). Scottish Health Survey. Available via: [Scottish Health Survey 2019 - volume 1: main report - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-volume-1-main-report/pages/10.aspx)

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2019). Scottish Health Survey.

- Primary pupils are more likely to take part in Active Schools activity; 56% of primary school roll, 47% of ASN school roll and 31% of secondary school role took part in Active Schools¹¹.
- 44% of pupils said that they would be less active without their Active Schools activity. There are key differences between primary and secondary aged pupils. 39% of primary aged pupils (aged 8 to 11 years old) said that they would be less active without their Active Schools activity compared to 53% of secondary aged pupils (aged 12 to 17 years old)¹².
- Secondary pupils report lower levels of physical confidence and competence than primary pupils¹³.

Sex

- Less than half of the female school roll take part in Active Schools activity. Secondary aged females have the lowest participation in Active Schools (+3% secondary female since 2014)¹⁴.
- Teenage girls (13-15 year old's) are less likely to meet the physical activity guidelines compared to teenage boys – 30% of girls compared to 44% of boys¹⁵.
- Sport participation shows a similar trend - teenage girls are less likely than teenage boys to take part in sport, 56% of girls compared to 63% of boys¹⁶.
- Girls in Active Schools are less likely to 'feel included' compared to boys when taking part in sport and physical activity, males rated this ten percentage points higher than females¹⁷.
- Girls feel judged on their appearance and ability when taking part in sport and physical activity. 42% of teenage girls avoid exercise when they have their period¹⁸.

¹¹ sportscotland Active Schools Monitoring data 2018-19

¹² sportscotland ASOF Schools Survey (2020)

¹³ sportscotland ASOF Schools Survey (2020)

¹⁴ sportscotland Active Schools Monitoring data 2018-19

¹⁵ Scottish Government (2019). Scottish Health Survey.

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2019). Scottish Health Survey.

¹⁷ sportscotland ASOF Schools Survey (2020)

¹⁸ Women in Sport (2018). Puberty and Sport: An invisible stage. Available via: [PUBERTY & SPORT: AN INVISIBLE STAGE The impact on girls' engagement in physical activity](#)

Ethnicity

- Minority ethnic groups are younger than the general population and many were born in Scotland¹⁹
- There is a large geographic variation in the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. This ranges from 2% in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to 24% Glasgow City Council.²⁰
- Analysis of the 2011 Census by the Scottish Government demonstrates a complex interaction between ethnicity and socio-economic position in Scotland. People describing themselves as African, Caribbean or Black are much more likely to be living in the most deprived areas while those describing themselves as Indian, Chinese and mixed/multiple ethnic group are more likely to live in the least deprived areas of Scotland²¹.
- Sport participation rates tend to be markedly lower amongst non-white minorities. However, there is significant variation across and within different diverse ethnic groups²².
- Black children and young people recorded some of the largest decreases in activity levels during the COVID19 pandemic. This coincided with a decrease in strong agreement to attitudes indicators (Competence, Confidence, Enjoyment, Understanding, Knowledge).²³
- Black and Asian girls least active compared to all girls and black and Asian boys.²⁴

Religion and Belief

- Small numbers limit the analysis that is possible on sport by ethnicity²⁵.
- Many of the patterns in sport participation by faith reflect those seen between different ethnicities, which highlights the closeness of the relationship that exists between faith and ethnicity amongst many groups and communities²⁶.

¹⁹ Scottish Public Health Observatory (2020) Available via: [Ethnicity Population Group](#)

²⁰ Scottish Government (2019) Pupil Census.

²¹ Walsh, D., Buchanan, D., Douglas, A. et al. Increasingly Diverse: the Changing Ethnic Profiles of Scotland and Glasgow and the Implications for Population Health. Appl. Spatial Analysis 12, 983–1009 (2019). Available via: [Increasingly Diverse: the Changing Ethnic Profiles of Scotland and Glasgow and the Implications for Population Health - White Rose Research Online](#)

²² Scottish Government (2015) Active Scotland Outcomes: Indicator Equality Analysis. Available via: [Active Scotland Outcomes: Indicator Equality Analysis - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

²³ Sport England (2021) Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Coronavirus (Covid 19). Available via: [Active Lives | Sport England](#)

²⁴ Sport England (2021) Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Coronavirus (Covid 19).

²⁵ Council Limited (2020). Equality and Sport Research 2020.

²⁶ Council Limited (2020). Equality and Sport Research 2020.

- Research has indicated that there are lower levels of participation from people identifying with a particular religion, than those with no religion. However, analysis by the Scottish Government has highlighted clear correlation with age, which also impacts on sports participation levels, because younger people are much less likely to be religious and much more likely to be physically active²⁷.

Sexual orientation / gender reassignment

- More than half of LGBT pupils (54%), even if not bullied themselves, ‘frequently’ or ‘often’ hear homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language in sports lessons. One in seven LGBT pupils (14%) are bullied during sports lessons²⁸.
- Nearly two in three trans pupils (64%) say they are not able to play for the sports team they feel comfortable in. Trans pupils who are able to play for the sports team they feel comfortable in are three times more likely to feel welcome and included in sports lessons at school than those who are not (60% compared to 20%)²⁹.
- Transphobic behaviours and attitudes have a negative impact to trans participation in sport. Almost 90% of respondents consider homophobia and particularly transphobia in sport a current problem. 20% refrain from participating in a sport of interest due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity³⁰.

Poverty and Low-income families

- Poverty in Scotland is highest amongst families with children. Around 230,000 or about one in four of Scotland’s children are officially recognised as living in poverty³¹.
- Pupils that live in the most deprived areas of Scotland were more likely to be inactive when their Active Schools activity was removed. When Active Schools activity is included, the percentages of those classed as ‘inactive’ decreases across all SIMD quintiles to below 10%. The biggest change is for pupils in the most deprived areas

²⁷ Scottish Government (2015) Active Scotland Outcomes: Indicator Equality Analysis

²⁸ Stonewall (2017). Stonewall School Report, The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain’s schools in 2017. Available via: [Stonewall | School Report 2017](#)

²⁹ Stonewall (2017). Stonewall School Report, The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain’s schools in 2017.

³⁰ LEAP Sports Scotland (2019) Outsport Scotland Report. Available via: [Resources | LEAP Sports Scotland](#)

³¹ Scottish Government (2020). Poverty and income inequality statistics. Available via: [Poverty and income inequality statistics - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

(SIMD Quintile 1) where 5% move from 'Inactive' to 'Some Activity' or 'Active' when Active Schools activity is included³².

- Households with the lowest incomes are the least active and suffer the highest obesity rates. For children living in the most deprived areas, obesity prevalence was more than double that of those living in the least deprived areas.³³
- Almost two thirds of children in poverty lived in a household with someone in paid work. This level was broadly as high as in previous years, but much higher than ten years ago, when only half of the children in poverty had lived in working households.³⁴
- Rural poverty accounts for 16% of all poverty in Scotland. Rural poverty is often less visible than in urban areas and harder to measure. A key issue is that it costs 10% to 30% more for families with children to live in rural Scotland than in an urban area.³⁵
- Research on the relationship between poverty and access to sport for young people highlighted not just practical barriers like cost and availability of the right informal activities but also emotional barriers around perceptions of safety and ownership of local space as well as wider social circumstances.³⁶

Care Experienced Young People

- 14,015 children were 'looked after' on 31st July 2019, a decrease of 723 (5%) from 2018, and the seventh consecutive year of decline³⁷.
- Latest figures show that Care Experienced school leavers continue to have lower attainment than other school leavers and leave school earlier than their non-Care Experienced peers³⁸.

³² sportscotland ASOF Schools Survey (2020)

³³ The Centre for Social Justice (2020) A Level Playing Field: Equalising access to sport and exercise for young people after Covid-19. Accessed via: [A Level Playing Field: Equalising access to sport and exercise for young people after Covid-19 - The Centre for Social Justice](#)

³⁴ Scottish Government (2020). Poverty and income inequality statistics.

³⁵ Glass, J., Bynner, C. and Chapman, C. (2020). Children and young people and rural poverty and social exclusion: A review of evidence. Glasgow: Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland. Accessed via: [Children and young people and rural poverty and social exclusion: A review of evidence - Enlighten: Publications \(gla.ac.uk\)](#)

³⁶ Street Games (2015) Moving the goalposts: poverty and access to sport for young people. Access via: [Moving the Goal Posts - Poverty and Access to Sport for Young People | StreetGames](#)

³⁷ Scottish Government (2020) Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2018-2019. Accessed via: [Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2018-2019 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

³⁸ Scottish Government (2020) Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland, 2018-2019.

- Communication between different stakeholders is important in facilitating access to activities.³⁹
- Right to Be Active (R2BA) report on care experienced young people experiences on physical education and school sport found that only 40% of the young people felt they had the same opportunities to take part in sport as friends who were not in care. The main barriers to participation were low self-confidence, transport, and money⁴⁰.
- Sports clubs are seen as “missing spaces” for care experienced young people and not accessible⁴¹.
- The research highlighted the need for consideration of the care context – foster care, residential care, kinship care etc. and the potential variability within – is required to ensure that care experienced youths’ participation in all forms of sport and physical activity is facilitated appropriately⁴².

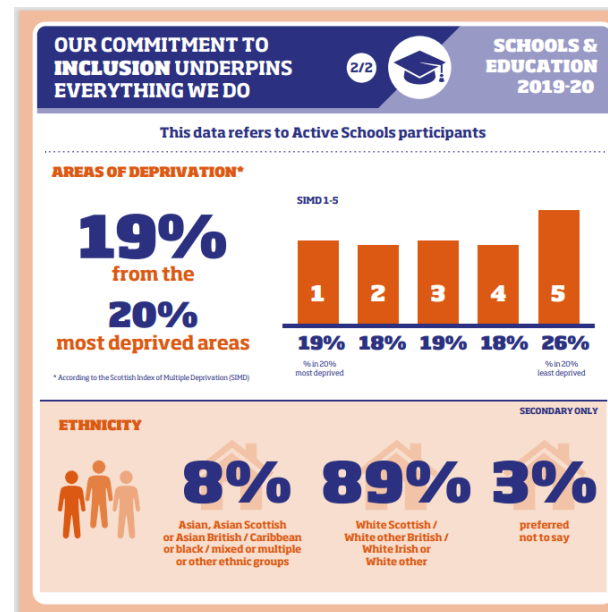
The infographics below show the equality profile of children taking part in Active Schools. We collected equalities data through the ASOF survey to supplement our own monitoring data.

³⁹ Quarmby, T., Sandford, R. & Elliot, E. (2018) ‘I actually used to like PE, but not now’: Understanding care experienced young people’s (dis)engagement with physical education, Sport, Education and Society. Accessed via: [‘I actually used to like PE, but not now’: understanding care-experienced young people’s \(dis\)engagement with physical education: Sport, Education and Society: Vol 24, No 7 \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

⁴⁰ Sandford, R and Quarmby, T and Duncombe, R and Hooper, O (2020) Right to Be Active : Young People Report. Project Report. Leeds Beckett University. Accessed via: [Right to Be Active : Young People Report - Leeds Beckett Repository](#)

⁴¹ Sandford, R and Quarmby, T and Duncombe, R and Hooper, O (2020) Right to Be Active : Young People Report

⁴² Sandford, R and Quarmby, T and Duncombe, R and Hooper, O (2020) Right to Be Active : Young People Report



ASOF surveys 2019-20 <https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-publications/archive/asof-contribution/>

Recommended Actions

The EQIA recommends actions to help us eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations. Two broad themes were identified for actions:

- **Knowledge and Understanding:** Helping the Active Schools Network make inclusive decisions based on local school and community need.
- **Development and Delivery:** Resources and tools to put knowledge and understanding into practice.

Knowledge and understanding actions	Focus protected characteristic	Owner	Timeline
<p>Improving the use of equalities data</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide training for Active Schools Managers and Coordinators on their equalities data and how to interpret this. 2. Develop a toolkit for ASC's on using data to start conversations (including resources to help Active Schools teams to articulate their contribution at a local level with teachers, local authority and third sector partners). 	<p>All – with the aim of more effective local targeting</p>	<p>Research team AS project group</p>	<p>2021/22</p>
<p>Equalities training and development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a national learning and development review to understand the equalities training currently accessed by the Active Schools network. 2. sportscotland support and enhance the inclusion training needs of the Active Schools network. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o identify and engage partner organisations who represent children and young people with protected characteristics to help deliver training/develop content and materials 	<p>All – review will help identify areas to prioritise.</p>	<p>AS project group</p>	<p>2021/23</p>
<p>Sharing best practice</p> <p>sportscotland to develop opportunities to support peer-to-peer learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect strong practice from across the Scottish sport sector and strategic partners. 2. Develop opportunities and platforms to allow those with greater expertise to have a proactive role in sharing good practice and helping others. 	<p>All - start with disability, poverty and low-income families, sex.</p> <p>Activity to include response to COVID.</p>	<p>AS project group</p>	<p>2021/22</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Active Schools Hot Topic sessions, Active Schools Managers networking events. 			
Development and delivery actions	Focus protected characteristic	Owner	Timeline
<p>Delivering change</p> <p>sportscotland to lead a national campaign to promote inclusive school sport and empower the Active Schools network to embed equality and inclusion into their approach.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. conduct a review of existing resources which can be used to promote and deliver inclusive school sport opportunities. 2. identify and engage partner organisations who represent children and young people with protected characteristics to help learn from their experience and develop content. 3. implement an inclusive school sport communication plan to deliver key inclusion messages and provide a platform for the Active Schools Network to progress activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ phased approach working towards a national campaign delivered in partnership with strategic partners. 	All	AS project group	2021-2023

Sign off

Assessment signed off by:	Senior management team
Sign off date	June 2021

Appendix 1:

EQIA project group members:

- Ailsa Wyllie - Lead Manager
- Barry Cook - Partnership Manager
- Fiona Cook - Partnership Manager
- Jacqui Fitzpatrick - Research Officer
- Katie Oman - Partnership Manager
- Nicola Potts - Business Intelligence Officer
- Steven Lytham - Partnership Manager

Project group session plans:

- Introduction to EQIA, set parameters, consultation discussion. (1 hour)
- Understanding the evidence (4 hours)
- Action building (3 hours)

Appendix 2:

Internal consultation:

- Callum Imray – Partnership Manager
- Claire Welsh – Communications Manager
- Dawn McAuley – Lead Manager
- Jacqueline Lynn – Sports Development Head
- Louise Dobbie – Research Officer
- Olivia Collison Owen – Communications Project Officer
- Patricia Horton – Research Manager

External consultation:

- Active Schools Managers consultation group – 13th July 2021
- External partners will be consulted in the development and delivery of actions.