



Department for
Digital, Culture,
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Research and analysis

Evaluation of the Enrichment Partnership Programme (EPP)

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Executive summary

Introduction

Enrichment activities encompass a range of activities that happen in addition to the school curriculum and that pupils can choose to take part in. Enrichment activities can include sports, the arts, outdoor activities, debating, volunteering, or gaining experience of the wider world of work/study to name a few. Previous research has shown that enrichment activities have the potential to offer a wide range of benefits to pupils such as improving resilience, motivation, attendance, social skills, making new friends, developing appreciation for cultural and/or social issues and encouraging them to explore and pursue new goals or interests (Cutmore, Llewellyn and Atkinson, 2020). However, not all pupils get the same opportunities to take part in enrichment activities, with socio-economically disadvantaged pupils being less likely to take part than their more advantaged peers (Donnelly et al., 2019; Fraser, 2023).

Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education (DfE), the Enrichment Partnerships Pilot (EPP) ran from November 2023 to March 2025 and was designed to help improve enrichment opportunities and increase participation among pupils that are not otherwise taking part in any enrichment activities.

About the EPP

To oversee and support the delivery of the EPP, DCMS and DfE recruited 2 joint delivery partners: The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) and National Citizen's Service Trust (NCST). NCST and DofE then recruited 17 coordinating organisations (COs) from across 3 regions of England – the North East, North West and East of England. The COs were either local authorities, third sector organisations, or multi-academy trusts (MATs) and their role was to work with local mainstream secondary schools and enrichment providers to improve the range of, quality of, and access to enrichment opportunities available for young people in each local area. Each CO was tasked with recruiting 10 local mainstream secondary schools to work with during the pilot, resulting in 166^{[\[footnote 1\]](#)} schools taking part.

The COs then undertook detailed needs assessments to find out what schools and pupils wanted from enrichment activities. It was intended that COs used this information to improve the enrichment provision on offer, including linking schools with relevant local enrichment providers, but they were able to use different delivery models to achieve this. The aim of this pilot was to test whether this coordinated approach to delivering enrichment activities would lead to improved relationships between local schools and enrichment providers and result in more pupils taking part in enrichment activities, without increasing the burden on school staff. While there was particular interest in increasing participation among pupils not already taking part in any enrichment activities, the activities were open to all young people in each area.

Evaluation aims

The aims of this evaluation were to understand:

- how the EPP was delivered
- if the intended outcomes (for example, more diverse and better-quality enrichment offers, better relationships between local schools and enrichment providers, and more pupils taking part in enrichment activities) were achieved
- what learning can be applied to potential future delivery and contribute to the literature about enrichment

Method

This evaluation was a mixed methods process and outcomes evaluation that combined pilot-wide data collection approaches with data from school case studies (14 at baseline, 13 at follow-up). The pilot-wide data collection activities included surveys and monitoring information (MI) (about what activities were offered, when, and how many pupils took part) with schools and enrichment providers, as well as interviews with COs and stakeholders (DofE, NCST, DCMS and DfE). The case study activities comprised baseline and follow-up pupil surveys, pupil background information, interviews or focus groups with school staff, pupil focus groups, and interviews with enrichment providers. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analysed using a combination of deductive and inductive thematic analysis. Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) was used to explore the different causal pathways that led to increased pupil uptake of enrichment activities among case study schools.

Key Findings

Youth engagement

At the start of the EPP, COs undertook detailed needs assessments to understand what kinds of enrichment activities schools and pupils wanted in each local area. Where learning from these needs assessments was used to inform enrichment delivery, the QCA indicated that this information helped improve pupil uptake of enrichment activities. For example, some COs reported that pupils living in areas of high socio-economic deprivation had expressed an interest in cooking, because they were not getting meals at home and the school MI template indicated that the proportion of schools offering cooking activities increased from 40% at baseline to 61% at follow-up. Where school staff reported increases in pupil participation in enrichment activities, this was partially attributed to having a wider range of activities on offer which appealed to a greater number of pupils.

There were also instances of COs incorporating pupil voice throughout the delivery period so that they could receive continuous input and feedback from young people. For example, some COs trained pupils to quality assure enrichment activities. This involved training pupils to observe enrichment activities, talk to the pupils attending the activities in order to capture their

views about the activities, and then provide feedback about the quality of the activities to the enrichment providers. COs who used this approach, expected enrichment providers to act on this feedback and make alterations to their enrichment delivery accordingly. COs felt this approach had helped ensure that the activities on offer were high quality and met pupils' needs.

Partnership working between schools and enrichment providers

One of the core aims of the pilot was to improve relationships between schools and local enrichment providers and there was some evidence from the school and enrichment provider surveys that the pilot achieved this.

At the end of the pilot, more schools reported using external enrichment providers (67% compared with 56% at baseline) and having established links with them (72% at follow-up compared with 45% at baseline). Furthermore, 65% of schools felt the quality of their relationships with local enrichment providers had improved. Meanwhile, 52% of enrichment providers reported improved relationships with local schools. Despite this, at the end of the EPP, three-quarters of schools (74%) still wanted more information about what external providers could offer and 42% of schools said they could not afford to use external enrichment providers. In addition, only 11% of schools agreed that they would look for an external provider rather than using their own staff if they wanted to deliver a new enrichment activity in the future.

Enrichment provision and uptake – school and pupil perspectives

On average, schools reported they had added a small number of additional activities to their enrichment offer and were more satisfied with their enrichment offer at the end of the pilot. These results may indicate that the EPP helped improve the number and diversity of enrichment activities available and had helped schools improve their enrichment offer.

However, despite schools reporting an increase in enrichment provision, evidence about whether the pilot led to increased uptake of enrichment activities among pupils, which was a core outcome for the pilot, was more mixed. The school survey indicated that 70% of schools felt that pupil participation had increased during the EPP. However, the school MI templates, and pupil surveys indicated that participation had remained largely the same. This may partly have been because of different measurement scales used in these instruments and the tight timescales for the pilot, which means that although more activities were on offer this had not yet translated into increased pupil uptake.

There was some evidence from the school survey that participation in

enrichment activities may have slightly increased for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, as 60% of schools felt that the EPP had led to increased participation for these pupils. However, overall, socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils were still less likely to take part in enrichment activities than their peers.

The majority of the schools reported positive experiences of taking part in the EPP and felt it had helped them improve various aspects of their enrichment offer. For example, at the end of the EPP, 70% of schools felt their enrichment offer was better aligned with pupil needs and interests. However, there was a sizeable minority of schools (18% to 40%), spread across different COs, who reported in the individual survey items that the EPP had resulted in no changes to certain aspects of their enrichment offer. This included 'no changes' to the number of external providers they used (32% of schools), their understanding of pupils' enrichment needs or interests (23% of schools) and their ability to identify additional funding to support enrichment delivery (40%). While the school survey indicated that school staff had more capacity to deliver enrichment activities at the end of the EPP (48% compared with 31% at baseline) this was not backed up by the qualitative data, where school staff capacity was consistently reported as a key challenge. Overall, this suggests that schools had varied experiences of taking part in the EPP and that while some schools had positive experiences and made changes to their enrichment offer, for other schools the EPP offered limited benefits.

Enrichment provision and uptake – enrichment provider perspectives

Among enrichment providers who completed the follow-up survey, 42% reported that the EPP accounted for between 1% and 25% of their total enrichment delivery. A further 10% reported that the EPP accounted for 26% to 50% of their total delivery. However, around one-third (32%) of enrichment providers reported that they did not deliver any activities as part of the EPP. This may be because schools chose not to or were unable to take up their offer and this may partly be explained by the delivery models used by some of the COs. This likely explains why there was a sizeable proportion of enrichment providers who reported limited or no benefits from taking part in the EPP. For example, 31% of enrichment providers who completed the follow-up survey reported that the EPP had led to 'no change' in the quality of their relationships with local schools, and just over half of these respondents had previously reported that they did not deliver any activities as part of the EPP.

The difference enrichment activities made for pupils

The pupil focus groups indicated that pupils felt enrichment activities had offered them a range of benefits including improving their physical or mental health, making new friends, learning new skills and improving their confidence. However, not all these benefits can be attributed to the pilot as many of the enrichment activities pupils talked about in the focus groups already existed prior to the EPP. Despite pupils talking positively about building relationships with other pupils, we did not see quantitative changes in sense of school belonging or attendance. However, it was expected that these outcomes would take longer than the period of the pilot to achieve.

What does good enrichment look like

The case study data revealed that a 'good' enrichment offer for schools and pupils:

- provides choice about what activities pupils can take part in
- gives pupils the opportunity to meet, spend time with, and build relationships with likeminded people
- gives pupils the chance to develop new skills and have new experiences
- is inclusive and accessible to all pupils, but sessions are not too overcrowded
- is fun and enjoyable for pupils
- is informed by youth voice

How to improve pupil uptake of enrichment activities

QCA of the school case study data indicated that (i) using pupil voice to inform enrichment activities, (ii) offering at least some new enrichment activities during the school day and on school premises, and (iii) providing schools with funding were 3 different routes for successfully increasing pupil participation in enrichment activities. The interviews indicated that the presence of these factors helped to overcome some of the key barriers to school and pupil participation in EPP activities.

The interview and case study data indicated that schools having a good relationship with the CO as well as the use of external providers helped to increase the amount and variety of provision available. However, neither appeared to be necessary for improving pupil uptake – some schools increased uptake in the absence of a good relationship with the CO and/or without using external providers. The findings show that the involvement of COs and external providers resulted in other benefits, for example, being able to provide activities that school staff could not. It is also important to

note that further research would be needed to capture any longer-term effects.

The results of the QCA combined with the interview and case studies provide consistent evidence that a lack of funding for schools and enrichment providers was a barrier to implementation, and that providing some funding directly to schools to support enrichment may help overcome some of the funding-related challenges.

Learning points

The EPP coordination model provided additional capacity within the system as COs conducted needs assessments with schools and helped raise the profile of enrichment and increased the number of activities on offer. However, as outlined above, the pilot was less successful in some key areas, such as increasing pupil participation in enrichment and in supporting schools to access more funding for enrichment. In part, this was to do with the EPP's short timeframe, the model by which funding was deployed, as well as external challenges beyond the control of the delivery teams. Future initiatives to support enrichment in schools should consider the following learning points.

A longer timeframe should be given to allow activities to be planned, embedded and sustained.

The set-up phase should start earlier in the school year (ideally in the Autumn term) and last longer to allow new activities to be planned in time for the following academic year and to avoid clashes with school exam periods in the summer term. The delivery period should be at least one full academic year, and ideally longer, to give the activities the chance to embed and for potential outcomes to be observed, including any differences in outcomes between the delivery models used. It should also be recognised that the challenges created by the tight timeline could have been exacerbated by delays with the sign-off of the budget reprofile for the delivery partners. This delayed the recruitment of key delivery roles for the project. Allowing more time for the delivery or speeding up the approval processes would help overcome this challenge.

Consider ways of embedding pupil voice throughout the programme so that input from young people can inform delivery on an on-going basis.

Where COs used pupil voice on an on-going basis as part of the EPP, they felt this

had helped ensure that the enrichment activities were high quality and met pupils' needs.

Reconsider funding alignment and distribution to ensure that funding for school-based initiatives is aligned with the academic year (September to July).

Consideration should also be given to the distribution of funding provided to different stakeholders. In this pilot, most of the funding was provided to the delivery partners and COs. Despite the additional staff capacity created by the COs, school budgets for enrichment remained a barrier to implementation. As a result, future initiatives should think about how to address this persistent funding barrier. One option – as suggested by the results of the QCA – could be to allocate a proportion of the funding directly to schools to support enrichment activities. This would give schools the flexibility to decide where funding is best spent, depending on their particular barriers and needs. This would, however, need to be considered in the context of longer-term delivery and the aim of embedding successful enrichment delivery beyond the end of any funding period.

Having a named enrichment lead in schools as a single point of contact for COs and facilitating activities was felt to be helpful, as COs and enrichment providers knew who to contact, but school staff capacity remains a challenge

It is important to consider who should hold this role and how it fits with any other additional responsibilities the staff member already holds. Some COs felt that this role worked best when the enrichment lead held a non-teaching role as they had more time/capacity to respond.

COs should have a strong understanding of how to engage and work with schools

It was clear throughout the pilot that having previous relationships with or experience of working with secondary schools was a key delivery facilitator for COs. Seeking COs with this experience, for example by tightening the criteria required to demonstrate this and/or providing COs with support and guidance or 'top tips' at the beginning of the project, would likely be helpful for engaging schools.

Consider commissioning the evaluation of future projects alongside the delivery commissioning

One of the key challenges relating to the evaluation, particularly in the early stages of the EPP, was the overlap between the evaluation activities and the needs assessments being undertaken by the COs. Aligning the commissioning of the delivery and evaluation aspects of the pilot and allowing time for the evaluation and delivery teams to work together from the set-up phase would enable them to agree data collection needs before the participants (in this case, the COs, schools and

enrichment providers) are on-boarded. Aligning delivery and evaluation data collection processes promptly could reduce the burden of participation on schools.

Limitations of this research

There were several limitations that affected the present evaluation.

- External factors outside of the control of the delivery team and evaluation team: the timing of the general election significantly impacted baseline data collection, as government-funded research was restricted during the pre-election period. Furthermore, the announcement (November 2024) and subsequent closure (March 2025) of one of the delivery partners, NCST, affected delivery and may have influenced the results of the evaluation especially around sustainability.
- The response rates from enrichment providers to the evaluation activities were lower than anticipated, meaning the data may not be representative of all providers involved. This may partly be due to the delivery models used by some COs: for example, in some 'signposting' approaches to delivery, an enrichment provider might be listed on a website, but it was up to schools to take-up the offer. Enrichment providers were also recruited to the EPP later than planned and participation fluctuated over time with new providers being brought into the EPP throughout the programme. Some enrichment providers were unaware of the EPP when they were contacted to take part in the evaluation activities. Ensuring that all enrichment providers (including those in 'signposting' models) are provided with core information about the delivery and about participation in any associated evaluation of future similar programmes would help to overcome these challenges.
- The selection of case study schools was limited as case study schools had to be selected before the full list of EPP schools was confirmed. There was also limited prior information about the model of delivery each CO was using. Drop-out of 3 of the 16 case study schools by the endpoint meant fewer COs and delivery models were represented in the case studies than originally planned. Allowing more set-up time (see Learning Points) would help to overcome this limitation, as it would mean case studies could be selected once all the schools had been recruited and more information about each delivery model was available.
- Similarly, delays to school recruitment to the pilot meant pupil data was not available in time to be able to pre-populate the pupil surveys. It was therefore not possible to link data from the baseline and follow-up pupil surveys. Consequently, the survey analysis was restricted to descriptive statistics. Again, a longer set-up

phase would help to address this challenge in future projects.

- Due to the short timeline of the pilot, some COs targeted recruitment at schools they knew would be more likely to respond positively or had a particular interest in enrichment. This approach means it is possible that these schools were not the core target audience for the pilot given the aim was to improve enrichment provision, especially for pupils not already taking part in any activities. Providing additional guidance to COs about which schools to approach would help to overcome this, as well as more time for recruitment so that COs/delivery teams can spend more time explaining the offer to ‘new’ or unfamiliar schools.
- The evaluation plan workshops indicated that schools and enrichment providers routinely collected detailed information about enrichment participation. However, this was not the case for all schools or enrichment providers. Agreeing a data collection approach with the delivery partners for schools, enrichment providers and COs to follow would ensure that sufficiently detailed data was consistently collected across all stakeholders. However, it is also important to ensure that data collection asks are proportionate and do not place undue burden on schools and enrichment providers.
- The evaluation was not designed to be an experimental impact evaluation therefore there are no counterfactual results. This combined with the use of descriptive, rather than inferential statistics in the evaluation (owing to the limitations of the data collection), means that the quantitative results should be treated as indicative. In addition, the samples of respondents (for example, schools) at baseline and follow-up do not exactly overlap meaning that any differences observed may be due to variation in the make-up of respondents rather than change caused by the pilot; the extent of this cannot be measured. To obtain more robust results, further research should be conducted, ideally with a longer pilot timeline.

1. Introduction

Schools are encouraged by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide a broad range of experiences and enrichment activities such as sports, the arts, outdoor activities, debating, volunteering, or gaining experience of the wider world of work/study (to name a few). However, this is not a statutory requirement. These activities have no agreed upon overarching term; though recent literature and practice favours the term ‘enrichment’ (see Stockman, 2024).

Enrichment activities have the potential to offer a wide range of benefits to pupils such as improving resilience, motivation, attendance, social skills, making new friends, developing appreciation for cultural and social issues and encouraging them to explore and pursue new goals or interests. For example, in the evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme (Cutmore, Llewellyn and Atkinson, 2020), young people reported a range of benefits from participating in enrichment activities including increased confidence, resilience, social and emotional intelligence, while school staff reported improved pupil behaviour and pupil attendance. Importantly, confidence and social skills were highlighted as key to students' future employment prospects in the 'Unequal Playing Field' report for the Social Mobility Commission (Donnelly et al., 2019). In addition, enrichment activities may help tackle some of the key challenges faced by young people, such as by supporting positive mental health, improving physical health and lowering obesity levels, reducing exposure to gangs and improving school absence rates (The Centre for Social Justice, 2021). Longitudinal research also indicates that short-term benefits of participating in enrichment, such as for physical health and wellbeing, pro-social behaviours and education, are sustained over decades (DCMS, 2024).

However, not all pupils have these opportunities. Schools with larger proportions of socially advantaged pupils generally offer more enrichment activities (Snellman, Silva and Putnam, 2015), and pupils from lower income backgrounds are less likely to participate in extra-curricular activities, such as music lessons or sports, than those from more affluent backgrounds (Donnelly et al., 2019; Fraser, 2023). Similarly, a recent survey showed that pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely to not be taking part in any enrichment activities through school compared with their non-FSM eligible peers (35% compared with 25%) (DfE, 2025).

Furthermore, the pattern of differential participation in enrichment activities based on socio-economic status continues into adulthood (DCMS, 2022). This emphasises the importance of young people having the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities early in their lives, especially as there is some evidence to suggest disadvantaged pupils may benefit at least as much as their more advantaged peers (Heath et al., 2018).

Previous research has suggested the role that external organisations working with schools may be able to play in supporting young people to increase their participation in enrichment (Ramaiah et al., 2024). This research suggested 5 key themes around effective partnership: understanding the local context; sufficient/increased capacity of staff; shared values and trust between organisations, built up over time; funding; and the importance of co-production/co-design with stakeholders and young people.

Research by Bertram et al. (2017) pointed out that the availability of school-based enrichment activities was related to school staff capacity and enthusiasm to run them. However, while existing research supports the expansion of disadvantaged pupils' access to enrichment activities, a more recent report emphasised that the expansion of provision should not fall solely on schools and teachers. Instead, the authors propose that additional funding should be provided to enable community and voluntary sector organisations to provide a greater number and variety of enrichment activities to local schools (The Centre for Social Justice, 2021).

1.1 About the EPP

The Enrichment Partnerships Pilot (EPP) ran from November 2023 to March 2025. This included a commissioning and set-up phase from November 2023 to July 2024 and a delivery phase from September 2024 to March 2025. The EPP was designed to help improve enrichment opportunities as well as encourage participation in enrichment activities among pupils not currently taking part in any enrichment activities. While there are a variety of reasons pupils choose not to, or are unable to engage in enrichment activities, previous evidence suggests that these pupils are disproportionately likely to be from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as these pupils experience additional barriers to participation including the cost of activities and lack of access or transport (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, 2014; Callanan et al., 2016). Therefore, by targeting pupils not currently engaged in enrichment activities in the EPP, it was hoped that socio-economically disadvantaged pupils would particularly benefit from the programme. However, within the schools and regions involved in the EPP the offer was universal and there were no restrictions on participation.

To help encourage pupil participation in enrichment activities, £2.73 million of funding was provided to support local coordination of enrichment opportunities using a systems-change partnership model^{[\[footnote 2\]](#)} in areas most in need of support – specifically Education Investment Areas (EIAs)^{[\[footnote 3\]](#)} (HM Government, 2022). The aim was for the EPP to complement the aims of the EIAs by creating opportunities for more pupils to access broader and more varied experiences and help support engagement with enrichment activities.

The EPP was funded via an award to Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education (DfE) from HM Treasury's Shared Outcomes Fund. They commissioned the National Citizen Service Trust (NCST) and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) as joint delivery partners to deliver the

programme.

1.2 Role of the EPP delivery partners and coordinating organisations

The primary role of the delivery partners (NCST and DofE) was to recruit COs to work with schools and enrichment providers to develop the enrichment offer in each local area and provide on-going support to the COs throughout the pilot. NCST and DofE worked together to deliver the programme but had distinct roles. NCST led the grant application process for COs and were responsible for grant management throughout the project. Meanwhile, DofE provided on-the-ground delivery support to the COs. Both delivery partners supported the COs throughout the project via one-to-one meetings which took place at least monthly.

The delivery partners also ran 2 types of quarterly networking opportunities for COs; regional hub meetings and the Centre of Learning. The regional hub meetings allowed COs to discuss live issues they were experiencing and share insights with each other. Meanwhile, the Centre of Learning was designed as more of a reflective space for all COs to come together, consider data from the EPP delivery, share and reflect on insights and learning from EPP delivery and consider how/what learning could be applied in other areas.

Each of the 4 Centre of Learning meetings focused on a different topic area. The 4 topics were:

- ① People and ways of working
- ② Youth voice and engagement
- ③ Resources and sustainability
- ④ Participation in enrichment activities and outcomes.

Schools and enrichment providers were also invited to attend some of the Centre of Learning meetings including the final meeting which took place face-to-face.

NCST and DofE selected 3 regions in England to participate in the EPP – the North

East, North West and East of England. Across these areas, they recruited 17 coordinating organisations (COs) consisting of local authorities (LAs), multi-academy trusts (MATs) and charity/voluntary sector organisations. The role of these COs was to connect local secondary schools with each other and with local enrichment providers, with the aim of improving the range, quality, and access to enrichment opportunities available for young people.

It was expected that during the set-up phase of the pilot (November 2023 to July 2024), COs would work with schools, enrichment providers and pupils in each local area to codesign and deliver the local enrichment offer. To support the on-going delivery of enrichment activities beyond the EPP, it was also anticipated that COs would work with schools and enrichment providers to identify additional funding sources to support enrichment delivery. The aims were for the EPP to:

- result in more variety of enrichment provision in each area that better matched pupils' interests
- facilitate the building of effective working relationships between local schools and between schools and enrichment providers which would be sustained beyond the end of the pilot

Part way through the pilot in November 2024 it was announced that NCST would be wound down and closed from March 2025. While the closure was due to take place at the end of the EPP, it is possible that this closure influenced the outcomes of the pilot and potential sustainability plans.

1.3 Evaluation approach and design process

The evaluation of the pilot took a mixed methods approach to offer both breadth and depth of insights. To inform the evaluation, 2 interactive Theory of Change (ToC) workshops were undertaken with key stakeholders from DCMS, DfE, NCST and DofE and a total of 5 evaluation plan workshops were undertaken with stakeholders from DCMS, DfE, NCST and DofE (2 workshops), COs (2 workshops) and school staff (1 workshop).

The ToC workshops provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss and come to a shared understanding of key elements of the project including the vision, target population and outcomes. These workshops resulted in the agreement of the following definitions for the project:

Enrichment

Enrichment activities had to be in addition to the regular school curriculum and pupils had to have a choice as to whether they participated in the activity or what activity they participated in.

Project vision

To improve access to and uptake of enrichment activities among secondary school pupils with a focus on increasing participation in enrichment activities for pupils who do not currently take part in any activities. It was also important to ensure that providing additional activities did not increase the burden on school staff.

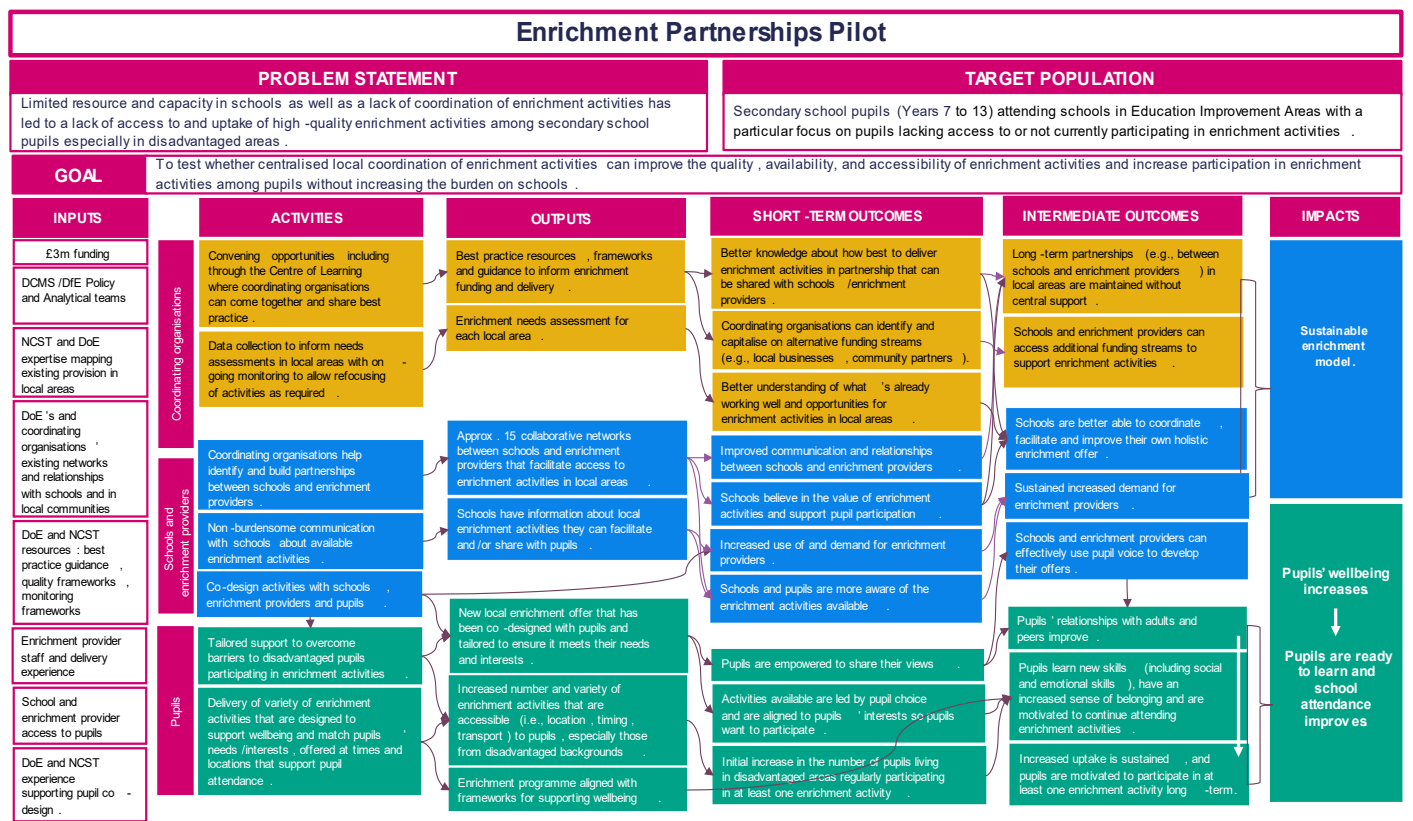
Target groups

COs, schools and enrichment providers, pupils.

Learning from these workshops was used to inform the working ToC for the pilot (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Initial Theory of Change developed from the Theory of Change workshops

Use zoom on your browser to view.



1.3.1 Measuring outcomes

The focus of the funding for this pilot was on the coordination aspects of local enrichment activities, which meant that the majority of the funding sat with the

delivery partners and COs. However, the goal of the pilot was focused on improving access to and participation in enrichment activities among pupils. There was therefore considerable discussion in the ToC workshops about pupil outcomes, the extent to which they should be measured in the pilot, and what could reasonably be expected to change in the timeframe available. While long-term it was hoped that the pilot would lead to a sustainable partnership model of enrichment provision in each local area, it was recognised that this was unlikely to be achieved within the pilot itself (as the delivery period to pupils was between September 2024 and March 2025). Consequently, it was agreed that measures of success for the pilot should primarily focus on short-term outcomes outlined in the ToC. This included improved relationships between schools and local enrichment providers, improved knowledge of the needs of local schools, pupils, and enrichment providers among COs, and improved ability of schools and enrichment providers to source additional funding for local enrichment activities. The presence of which would lay the foundations for long-term partnership working and sustainable change.

In terms of pupil outcomes, it was agreed that the success of the pilot would be judged based on whether initial uptake of enrichment activities had increased, as it was felt to be unlikely that some of the longer-term outcomes could be observed in the timeframe of the pilot. However, while longer-term outcomes are not being used to measure the success of the pilot, it was felt to be important to explore if there was any indication that the pilot was having a positive impact on any of the intermediate ToC outcomes. As a result, it was agreed that the evaluation would additionally gather data on pupil wellbeing in the pupil survey, while school attendance was recorded in the school monitoring information (MI) to look at these outcomes in an exploratory way ([see Chapter 3](#)).

2. Evaluation aims and objectives

The aims of this evaluation were to understand:

- how the EPP was delivered
- if the intended outcomes were achieved (for example, more diverse and better-quality enrichment offers, better relationships between local schools and enrichment providers, and more pupils taking part in enrichment activities)
- what learning can be applied to potential future delivery and contribute to the literature about enrichment

To meet these aims the evaluation objectives were to:

- understand how funding was awarded and who (COs, schools, enrichment providers) took part in the pilot
- understand the process of delivering the pilot including the coordination activities that took place, capturing what worked well and what lessons have been learned for any future delivery
- understand if the outcomes of the pilot were achieved, particularly if schools have improved their enrichment offer and delivery of that offer
- deliver findings that can inform any future delivery and create new evidence in this subject area

2.1 Research questions

The research questions for the evaluation were developed in consultation with key stakeholders from DCMS, DfE, DofE and NCST. These questions were used to guide the evaluation, and the results are structured accordingly.

1. What did and did not work well during the set-up phase of the pilot delivery?

- What was the role of the delivery partners and how effective were they perceived to be?
- What were the barriers and facilitators to the set-up of the EPP including any place-specific factors?
- How did organisations who applied to be COs hear about the opportunity and what was their experience of the application process?
- How well did the codesign approach work, who participated in the codesign activities and to what extent did the codesign activities draw upon pupil voice?

2. What enrichment activities were delivered during the pilot? What were the barriers and facilitators to successful implementation of enrichment delivery including place-specific factors?

- What was the role of the delivery partners? After initial set up how were they involved and how did this compare to what was planned originally?
- Who was involved in delivering the enrichment activities during the pilot and what did they do?

- What were the barriers and facilitators to a) school and b) pupil participation in enrichment activities?
- What changes could be made to support future delivery?

3. What did participants think of the pilot and its activities?

- What were COs' views about schools' and enrichment providers' engagement with the pilot and the role the delivery partners played?
- What were schools' views about the quality, variety, and availability of the enrichment activities and how did they find working with the enrichment providers, and their CO?
- What did pupils think about the enrichment activities offered during the pilot and what was their experience of participating in them?
- Did views on the pilot vary by place?

4. How has the pilot changed the enrichment activities available locally (for example, variety, quality, location, increased capacity)? What difference are these changes perceived to have made for enrichment providers, schools, and pupils? How did this vary by place?

- What were the characteristics (gender, Free School Meals (FSM), age, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ethnicity) of the pupils who took part in the enrichment activities? Has the number of pupils taking part in enrichment activities increased?
- To what extent did the pilot reach pupils with previous low or no engagement with enrichment activities?
- How have the number of hours of enrichment activities available, range of activities, and/or accessibility of the enrichment activities to pupils changed?
- Are there any emerging benefits/perceived impacts for pupils?
- Did schools' opinions about the benefits of enrichment activities change during the pilot?
- What was the perceived role of the delivery partners and the COs in any changes to the local landscape of enrichment delivery? How effective were they each perceived to be?

5. To what extent do schools and enrichment providers plan to sustain the activities over the funded period and how will they do this? Is the pilot's partnership model something that could be maintained or scaled in future, and to what extent do place-specific factors influence this? If not, what are the barriers to sustained delivery?

- Have there been or are there anticipated to be any changes for schools in terms of their ability to provide a variety of enrichment activities in the future as a result of the pilot?
- Have there been or are there anticipated to be any changes for schools or enrichment providers in the financial/organisational costs of delivering enrichment activities as a result of the pilot?
- Has the pilot resulted in any changes consistent with the early stages of place-based working (for example, new and/or improved relationships, shared vision, greater understanding of local need) among schools and/or enrichment providers?
- To what extent will it be possible for schools and enrichment providers to sustain enrichment delivery without the delivery partners and/or the COs? How integral was their role to delivery during the pilot? What has happened (or needs to happen) in terms of 'succession planning'?

6. What does a 'good' quality enrichment offer look like for schools and pupils?

- What do schools/pupils want from enrichment activities? What would their ideal enrichment offer look like? To what extent did the pilot meet this?
- How did the enrichment activities incorporate elements known to help improve wellbeing (for example getting active, learning new skills and building relationships)?

3. Method

The evaluation was a mixed methods process and outcomes evaluation that combined pilot-wide data collection approaches with case studies. Full details about the method and analytical approach can be found in [Appendix B](#). The pilot-wide data collection approaches offered insights into the breadth of experiences across individuals and organisations taking part in the EPP. Meanwhile the case studies offered in-depth insights into the experiences of a subset of schools, pupils and enrichment providers.

Baseline data was collected from June to July 2024 and follow-up data collection took place from February to March 2025. The exception to this was the baseline enrichment provider MI data which was collected retrospectively for the summer 2024 in November 2024. This was because enrichment provider recruitment to the

project continued over the summer 2024 ([see Chapter 4.5](#) for more details about enrichment provider recruitment).

3.1 Pilot-wide data collection

The pilot-wide data collection activities took place across all organisations participating in the EPP to enable us to gather a breadth of insights from across the whole programme. The pilot-wide data collected consisted of the following activities:

School monitoring information (MI)* [baseline and follow-up]

To understand the number and types of enrichment activities schools delivered, what times activities were offered (for example at lunchtimes or after school) and the number of pupils who took part. In total, 67 responses (40%, N = 166) were received at baseline and 66 responses (43%, N = 155^{[\[footnote 4\]](#)}) at follow-up.

Online survey with schools [baseline and follow-up]

To understand schools' experiences of taking part in the EPP including working with their CO and local enrichment providers, as well as their views about programme sustainability and perceived outcomes. Surveys were administered using Questback software. A total of 107 responses (64%, N = 166) were received at baseline and 112 responses (72%, N = 155) at follow-up.

Enrichment provider monitoring information (MI)* [baseline and follow-up]

To understand the number and types of enrichment activities run by external enrichment providers^{[\[footnote 5\]](#)} that pupils accessed via, or were sign-posted to by their school, what times the activities were offered (for example after school) and how many pupils took part. Note that baseline data collection for the summer term in the academic year 2023 to 2024 took place retrospectively in November 2024 due to delivery delays. A total of 83 responses (35%, N = 232) were received from enrichment providers at baseline and 36 responses (14%, N = 255) were received at follow-up which was lower than expected. A high proportion (86%) of enrichment providers who completed the MI template at follow-up had also completed the MI template at baseline. However, it is important to acknowledge that the total number of enrichment providers who completed the MI template at follow-up was much smaller than at baseline (N = 36 at follow-up compared with N = 83 at baseline).

Online survey with enrichment providers [follow-up]

To understand enrichment providers' experiences of taking part in the EPP including barriers and facilitators to implementation, perceived outcomes and views about sustainability. The survey was administered using Questback software. In total, 78

(31%, N = 255) responses were received.

Interviews with coordinating organisations [baseline and follow-up]

To understand their experiences of the set-up and implementation phases of the EPP, including how well the codesign process worked, views about engagement with the EPP, barriers and facilitators, perceived outcomes and views about sustainability. One member of staff from each CO took part in an interview at each timepoint.

Key stakeholder paired interviews [baseline and follow-up]

To understand the commissioners' (DCMS and DfE) and delivery partners' (NCST and DofE) views about the delivery of the EPP. Topics included vision for the pilot, barriers and facilitators delivery, perceived outcomes and views about programme sustainability.

*Response rates to these activities were lower than anticipated, so results need to be interpreted with caution. Factors that contributed to these low response rates included organisations being unable to provide the data required, and enrichment providers being unaware of the EPP, or not having delivered any activities as part of it.

3.2 Case study data collection approach

To gather more in-depth insights into how the pilot has been delivered we recruited 16 case study schools ([see Appendix B: Full evaluation methods](#) for details). Each school case study contained the following elements:

Pupil survey (baseline and follow-up)

Conducted with all pupils in Years 7 and 9 at baseline who became Years 8 and 10 at follow-up. These year groups were selected on the basis that they would be present in schools and available to complete the pupil surveys at both the baseline and follow-up time-points. This means that they were not likely to be taking mock or formal exams at either data collection time-point, nor were they likely to change schools. It also meant that both younger and older year groups within the schools were represented.

Questions focused on pupils' participation in enrichment activities over the last half-term, barriers and facilitators to participation and elements of pupil wellbeing (sense of school belonging, relationships with adults and peers, and general life satisfaction). Surveys were completed on paper. At baseline 3,923 (59%) pupil

responses were received from across 14 case study schools, and at follow-up 4,177 (79%) pupil responses from 13 case study schools. The 2 schools that did not return pupil surveys at baseline withdrew from being case studies, so were not included in subsequent case study activities.

Pupil background information (follow-up [\[footnote 6\]](#))

This included pupils' names, dates of birth, unique pupil numbers (UPNs), school class, sex, and eligibility for free school meals (FSM) to allow the pre-population of the follow-up pupil surveys, so analysis could be undertaken by sex and FSM status, and to allow data linking for future analysis to be undertaken by DfE.

Pupil focus groups (follow-up)

13 case study schools were visited at the follow-up time-point. Schools were asked to select pupils to participate on the basis that they had taken up a new enrichment activity that academic year. In 10 schools, 2 focus groups were conducted per school. One focus group was conducted in the 3 remaining schools. Each focus group contained 6 to 8 pupils and lasted 45 minutes. Questions explored pupil views about the enrichment activities offered by their school, what difference taking part in enrichment activities had made for them and what a 'good' enrichment activity looks like. Post-it notes and collage activities were used to facilitate discussion and support participation. In total 142 pupils took part in the focus groups.

Interviews or focus groups with school staff (follow-up)

To understand schools' views about the EPP and the enrichment activities offered, barriers and facilitators to participation (schools and pupils), perceived outcomes and sustainability. Each interview or focus group lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. In total 25 school staff members took part.

Interviews with enrichment providers (follow-up)

To understand enrichment providers' experiences of taking part in the EPP including implementing the activities, relationships with schools, perceived outcomes and sustainability. Enrichment providers were nominated to participate by case study schools. However, only 6 case study schools worked with external providers as part of the EPP (see [Chapter 8](#) and [Chapter 9](#) for more details about why) and of these it was only possible to interview 4 [\[footnote 7\]](#) enrichment providers.

3.3 Data analysis

Quantitative analysis

Data was cleaned by NFER's Data Management Unit and then analysed using

descriptive statistics. This included a limited number of hypothesis-driven cross-tabulations for specific pupil survey questions according to responses to the self-reported contextual questions (SEND, length of time taken to travel to school and ethnicity) and at follow-up FSM eligibility.

To operationalise the 'school belonging' concept in the pupil survey, a composite measure of 'school belonging' was created by summing the 7 Likert scale responses (each converted into the numbers 1 to 5) measuring the level of agreement with each statement about school belonging. To confirm that the items within these composite measures were measuring the same underlying construct, confirmatory factor analysis was used at baseline.

School baseline MI data was matched with the average weekly whole school attendance data (as a percentage) from the autumn and spring terms of the 2023 to 2024 academic year published by DfE. This was compared with the attendance data schools provided in the follow-up MI templates^{[\[footnote 8\]](#)}. Only a small number of schools (N = 29) submitted this data, which limited the amount of data available to compare.

Data analysis was undertaken using the R statistical package. All statistical code and outputs were quality assured by a Senior Statistician from NFER's Centre for Statistics.

Qualitative analysis

Thematic analysis was undertaken in the qualitative analysis package MAXQDA using a deductive coding framework based on the ToC and the research questions. A mixture of deductive and inductive coding was used. Codes were then reduced to over-arching themes within each research question and differences between participant types (such as schools, pupils and enrichment providers) were also considered.

Results were grouped thematically within each research question and are reported by research question or sub-research question (see Chapters 4 to 11). Quotations are attributed to broad participant groups to reduce the potential to identify individual participants. This means that quotations from interviews with DCMS and DfE, NCST and DofE are attributed to 'stakeholders'.

Integrating qualitative and quantitative data

The qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were designed simultaneously to ensure the insights they offer complemented one another and to avoid gaps in the data collection. Each survey question was mapped to the research questions. The key themes from the qualitative data were then consolidated with the survey

responses, so the different insights these approaches offered could be compared and a judgement made as to whether they pointed towards consistent or diverging conclusions for each research question.

Binary (crisp) Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) was undertaken using fsQCA software to explore how different combinations of factors or conditions might lead to a successful outcome within a complex systems change approach. The key outcome of interest was defined as an increase in the overall number of pupils participating in enrichment activities based on the ToC ([Figure 1](#)). Potential factors that were important for achieving a successful outcome were defined based on the thematic analysis already conducted on the interviews. The data sources that could be used to determine if a factor was present or absent for each case study were then considered. This approach was expected to be iterative, so factors selected were logged for transparency of the analysis ([see Chapter 11](#) for details about the analysis).

4. Results: What activities were undertaken during the set-up phase of the pilot

The set-up phase of the pilot involved the delivery partners (DofE and NCST) recruiting 17 COs who were a mix of charity and third sector organisations, local authorities and MATs ([see Chapter 1](#) to work with schools and enrichment providers to coordinate enrichment delivery in each local area. Once recruited, the first task for the COs was to recruit 10^{[\[footnote 9\]](#)} local secondary schools to work with for the pilot. To understand what school staff and pupils wanted from enrichment activities, the COs then undertook needs assessments with these schools. The aim was for the information gathered during the needs assessments to inform the selection and recruitment of local enrichment providers to work with schools and pupils during the pilot.

4.1 Coordinating organisations generally found the application process straight-forward, but the timelines were tight for some

COs primarily heard about the pilot in one of 2 ways. Around half of COs heard about the pilot directly from DofE or NCST. These tended to be organisations that were currently or had previously worked with one of these organisations in another capacity. In many cases, these organisations had been invited to attend events or drop-in sessions to find out more information about the pilot. The other COs found out about the opportunity through their own grant managers/fundraisers, who had found information about the EPP online (for example, on the NCST website) and decided to apply.

COs reported that the application process itself was straight-forward and that they liked the structure of the application form. However, the tight timeline (3 weeks) to open and receive applications in order to fit with the overall project timelines created some challenges. A subset of COs reported that by the time they had seen the opportunity, they had very little time to complete the application form. Meanwhile, the delivery partners (DofE and NCST) reported that the tight timeline meant they had not been able to advertise as widely nor promote the opportunity as much as they could have done. This was felt to have potentially contributed to the lower quality and number of applications received from one region and the general under-representation of MATs after the initial application stage.

“A longer lead in time for application submissions and review and tender would have been helpful and then we could have reviewed where we were and made targeted events within that application round, as opposed to getting to the end of it and going ‘Oh my God, we haven’t got enough [COs] because the time frames were so tight.”

[Stakeholder]

Consequently, a second application stage was required to recruit additional COs for the pilot with a particular focus on the under-represented region and recruiting additional MATs. This resulted in a further 3 COs being appointed, giving a total of 17 COs across the 3 regions. However, because these 3 additional COs joined the project later than initially planned, they had less time available to complete the rest of the set-up phase tasks (discussed in [Section 4.2](#) and [Section 4.4](#) below).

Overall, stakeholders were satisfied with the mix of COs achieved after the second recruitment stage. Although it was noted that it would have been even better to have more COs who were local authorities or MATs, to allow comparisons between different types of CO, as most COs (12 out of 17) were third sector organisations. This may have been because the delivery partners (DofE and NCST) were also third

sector organisations, so had stronger networks with these organisations, especially as a number of the COs had worked with NCST previously.

4.2 Coordinating organisations' experiences of approaching and recruiting schools to participate in the pilot were mixed and depended on the strength of their pre-existing relationships with schools

Once the COs had been appointed, they were tasked with recruiting approximately 10 secondary schools each to work with during the pilot. All COs had set-out their plans for working with schools and their pre-existing relationships with schools in their applications to become part of the pilot. However, in practice, COs' experiences of recruiting schools to the pilot were mixed and this appeared to be strongly related to the strength of their pre-existing relationships with schools. COs with stronger pre-existing relationships with local secondary schools generally found it easier to recruit schools to the pilot. These COs tended to be organisations that were either well-established enrichment providers in the local area themselves, meaning they had worked closely with and/or delivered activities for local schools previously, or they were MATs, which meant they knew the local headteachers and understood how schools operate and therefore how best to work with them. Another factor that made school on-boarding easier was the decision by some COs to target schools they knew would be more likely to respond positively or had a particular interest in enrichment. Although, this approach means it is possible that these schools fell outside of the EPP's target groups given the aim was to improve enrichment provision, especially for pupils not already taking part in any activities. This means that there may have been less potential to detect change in this evaluation because the schools taking part were already offering good enrichment provision. However, COs felt this was a compromise required to meet the project timelines.

Meanwhile, for COs with fewer pre-existing relationships and those trying to recruit schools they had not worked with previously, the process of recruiting schools was much harder. These COs reported that it was difficult to find and access the right person within schools to speak to about enrichment. For example, some COs reported that they struggled to get past reception staff to speak to the school member they needed. Even where the right member of staff was identified and initial contact made, COs reported that capacity issues and competing demands within schools meant that there were often long delays getting responses to emails and

that it could be difficult to arrange meetings. This was made even more difficult in some cases by the time of year COs were trying to approach schools (Spring/Summer 2024). COs felt that where the EPP lead within the school held a non-teaching role, they were generally easier to contact as they had more time and capacity to respond. They also noted that some schools were wary about ‘the catch’ and what support was being offered as part of the programme. Meanwhile other schools declined to take part because they were already happy with their enrichment offer.

“I was so naive in thinking that if I went on their website, I looked at somebody who had a job role, sort of pastoral or somebody who dealt with behaviour or special needs, I would get to speak to them straight away, [but] I couldn’t get past that receptionist [...]”

[Coordinating organisation]

To overcome these difficulties, COs reported successfully using several different strategies to get in contact with and build relationships with schools, so they could then talk to them about participating in the EPP. These included:

- hand delivering letters to schools to introduce themselves and the pilot activities
- offering schools free activities that the CO would deliver themselves. This gave the CO a way into schools from which they could begin to build relationships
- providing a financial incentive for schools to take part in the pilot such as providing a small amount of funding towards staff cover for the enrichment lead
- working closely with the DofE Partnerships Officers who were hired to support the COs with delivery to get advice on different approaches to contacting and recruiting schools ([see Chapter 7](#))

While these approaches enabled COs to recruit the required numbers of schools, the challenges they encountered meant that school recruitment across the pilot took significantly longer than anticipated. This had a knock-on impact on the time COs then had available to complete the needs assessments with schools and pupils and to recruit enrichment providers before the school summer holidays. However, COs reported that once they had got schools recruited to the pilot, they were generally enthusiastic about the programme and appreciated having external support available. They felt there was generally good buy-in from senior school staff in the schools that signed up; the challenge was capacity on the ground in schools to liaise

with the CO. COs also noted that feedback from schools indicated they liked that they only needed to maintain contact with one person (the EPP lead at the COs), rather than liaising with multiple different people from multiple different organisations. The ease of having one point of contact was felt to have helped build positive relationships with schools.

4.3 Why did coordinating organisations and schools get involved with the EPP

COs got involved in the EPP for a variety of reasons that could be broadly grouped into key themes:

Improving pupil enrichment opportunities and broader outcomes

- supporting pupils and their parents/carers
- ensuring that pupils have a positive destination post-school
- improving enrichment opportunities for pupils with SEND

Learning about and sharing good practice

- interest in research
- wanting to share good practice

Creating a sustainable legacy

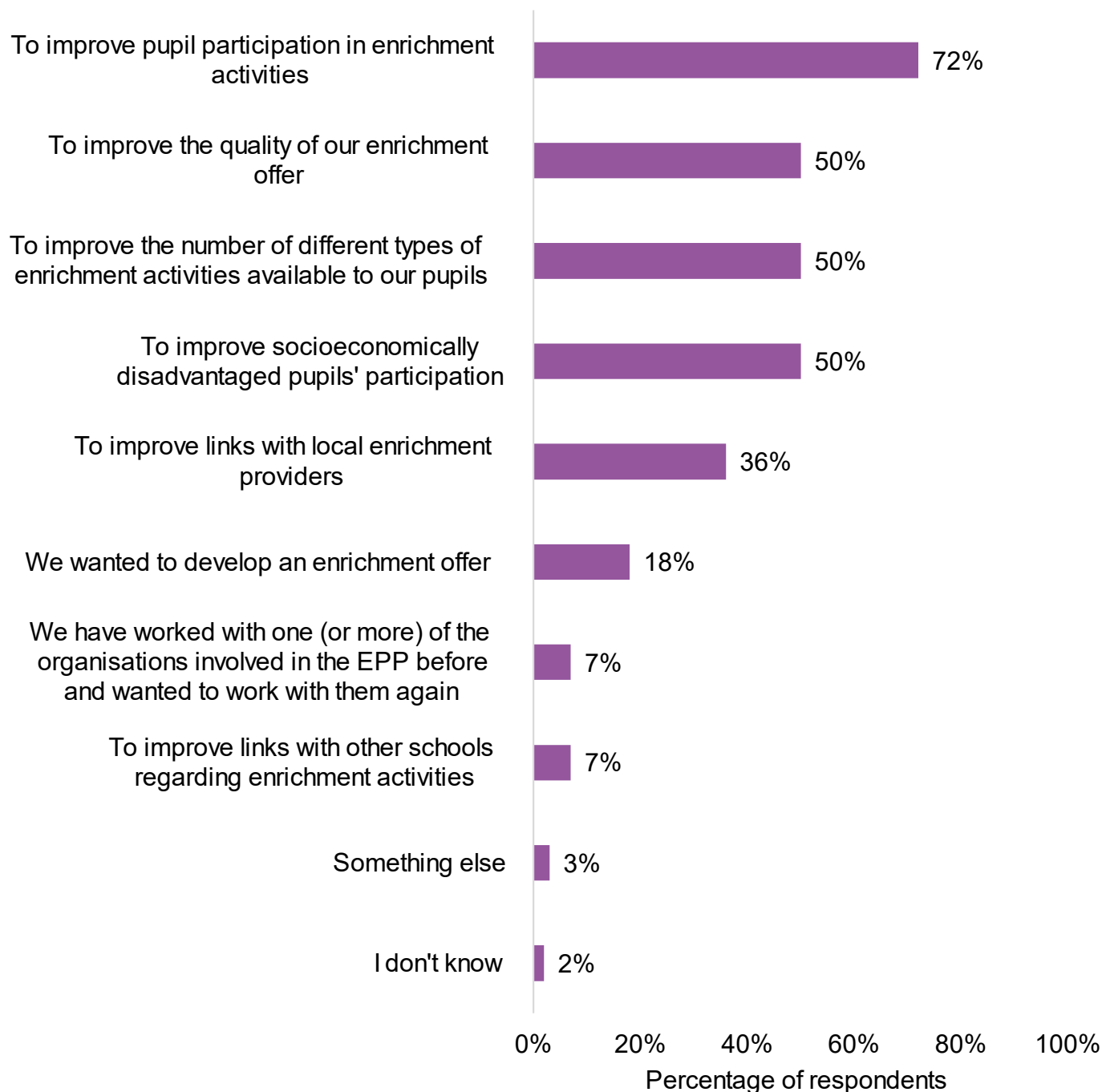
- building long-term partnerships with schools

Expanding their programmes to secondary schools

Meanwhile, the school survey revealed the main reasons schools chose to get involved in the EPP ([Figure 2](#)) were to improve pupil participation in enrichment activities (72%), including for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils (50%), and to improve the quality of their enrichment offer (50%) and the number of different activities available to pupils (50%).

Figure 2: Reasons schools chose to get involved in the EPP

Use zoom on your browser to view.

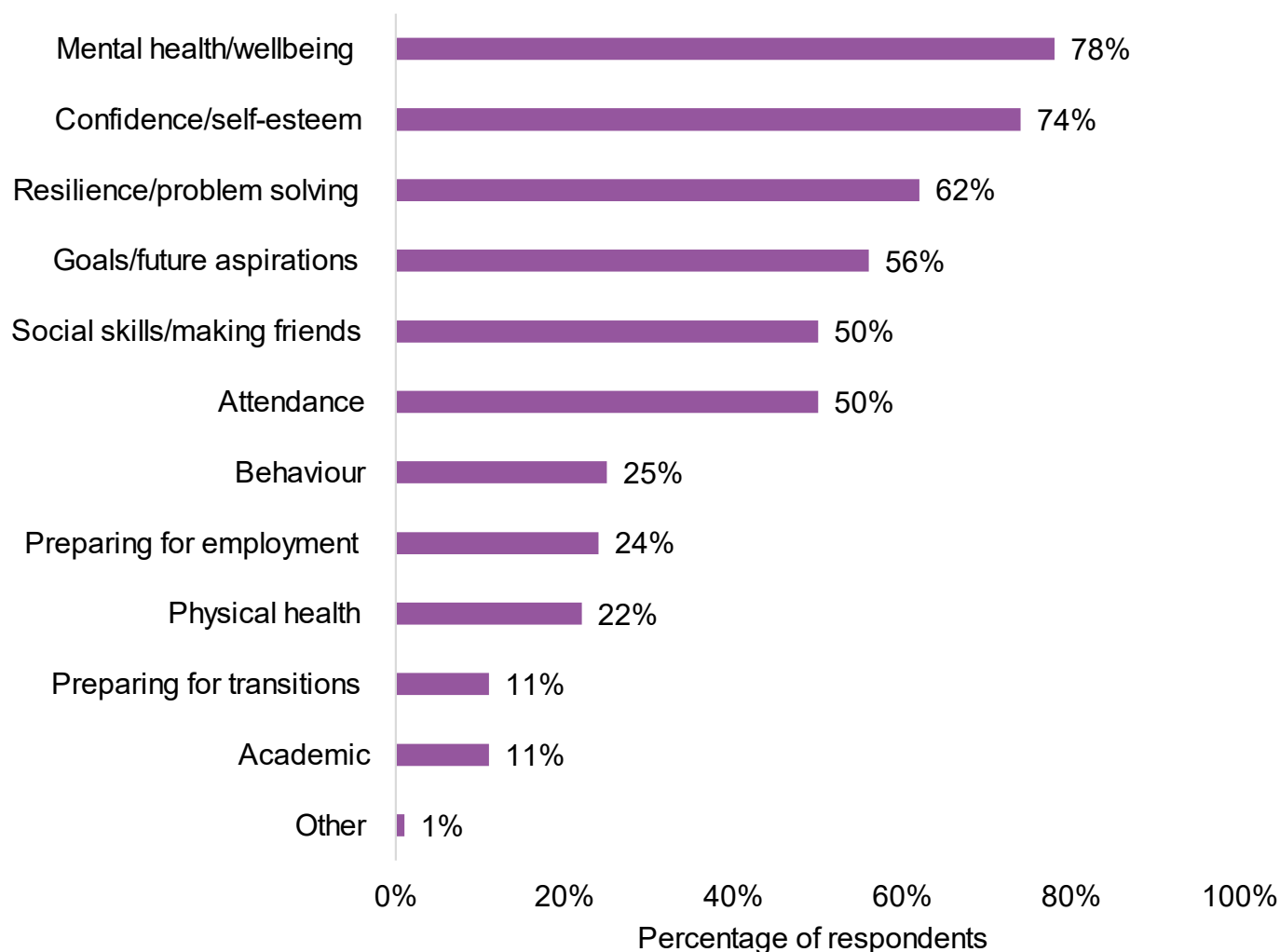


Data source: baseline school survey (N = 107) Note: schools could select up to 3 main reasons for getting involved in the EPP, so percentages do not sum to 100.

In addition to improving pupil uptake of enrichment activities, schools also hoped that their pupils would benefit from taking part in the activities in a variety of ways (Figure 3). They particularly hoped that taking part in the EPP activities would lead to improved mental health/wellbeing (78%) and improved confidence/self-esteem (74%).

Figure 3: Ways schools hoped pupils would benefit from taking part in the EPP activities

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline school survey (N = 107) Note: schools could select up to 3 main ways they hoped pupils would benefit from the EPP, so percentages do not sum to 100.

4.4 During the set-up phase, coordinating organisations undertook extensive codesign activities with schools and pupils to understand their enrichment needs

Codesign was a core element of the pilot, with the aim of ensuring that the enrichment offer COs put together met the needs of the schools and pupils taking part. Pupil voice was a particularly important aspect of this work and COs sought to capture the views of a wide range of different pupils, especially those who were not participating in any enrichment activities, and pupils that might experience additional barriers to participation, such as pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and pupils with SEND. COs used a variety of activities including focus groups, interviews and surveys to capture the perspectives of pupils, school staff,

and in some cases parents/carers. A subset of COs also drew upon existing Youth Voice boards in their local area, which contained a mixture of pupils from different schools, as part of their needs assessments.

At the time the baseline interviews for this evaluation took place, some COs had already completed their needs assessments and had captured the perspectives of hundreds, or in some cases thousands of pupils. For other COs their needs assessments were on-going or were about to begin. COs and delivery partners reported that they had encountered various challenges to undertaking the needs assessments. These challenges included:

- **Timing/capacity:** COs were attempting to undertake the needs assessments during the early part of summer term, when GCSE and A-Level exams were in progress. This meant there was limited staff capacity to support the needs assessments, and some year groups of pupils were unavailable to take part.
- **Overlap with central evaluation:** In many cases, the timing of the needs assessments overlapped with the baseline data collection for this independent evaluation, and the activities being undertaken were also similar (such as, surveys, focus groups), which increased the burden on participating schools.
- **Pupil selection:** COs sought to speak with a diverse range of pupils to understand their needs. However, some schools were felt to have only put forward pupils already doing a lot of enrichment to take part in the focus groups. In isolated cases, this led to the CO returning to the school at a later date to work with a more diverse range of pupils, including those not already taking part in enrichment activities.

“With the pupils, that’s been a little bit difficult because the schools have pushed forward their nice pupils that will talk, that already do enrichment. You know I did say bring me any child, you know, anyone who doesn’t even do it.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Overall, despite these challenges, there was consensus across the pilot stakeholders that the needs assessments had gone well and there was strong representation from schools and pupils, and in some cases parents/carers. The school survey showed that 85% of survey respondents felt their CO had asked them for their views to help shape their enrichment offer, and 72% reported that pupils at their school had been asked for their views. A lower proportion (55%) reported that

other staff at their school had been consulted by their CO.

COs with needs assessments underway or completed at the time we spoke with them were able to identify key learning from them. For example, COs identified cost-related barriers to pupils' participation in enrichment activities, especially in areas with high levels of socio-economic deprivation. Levels of deprivation were also felt to have impacted the types of enrichment activities young people wanted to do. For example, a CO reported that pupils in one area expressed an interest in cooking because they were not getting meals at home:

“[...] the thing that's probably been most frequently requested is cooking and again, having spoken to the teachers, a lot of those students aren't going home to a meal. So, they're interested in cooking. They also just want to get fed. But it was especially in schools where they perhaps didn't have food tech or where not all students are allowed to take part [in cooking].”

[Coordinating organisation]

Some COs noted that pupils were also keen to go on trips and have new experiences as many of their families could not afford to take them to different places.

“The other thing they'd all absolutely love is more trips to go more places, see more things, which, as I've said, they just don't get a lot of the chances to do things if they're not in the area. The buses become prohibitively expensive or transport and if their parents haven't got the money to take them these places there, they're not going to get to go.”

[Coordinating organisation]

COs gave other examples of enrichment activities requested by pupils, including specific sports (for example, boxing, basketball), work with animals, volunteering opportunities (social action), music, drama and support with confidence/anxiety.

In areas where there were limited local opportunities for future jobs or new experiences, COs found that young people often lacked aspiration and/or had low expectations of what opportunities could be provided.

“It’s also super sad that the aspirations are quite low....and I think they’re very aware of the pressures on the schools, financial pressures, teachers time and so they’re kind of like, oh, we could do that, but it’ll take up too much of the teachers’ time or sometimes they’re like, we’d never be allowed to do that, that wouldn’t happen round here...there’s stuff around aspirations that limits them and what they expect to be allowed, or they’ve lowered their expectations of what adults might be able to provide for them as well.”

[Coordinating organisation]

COs located in more rural areas identified distinct challenges in their local areas related to transport and the distance between different schools taking part in the pilot, and between schools and potential enrichment providers. This meant that there were often long travel times associated with taking part in enrichment activities and consequently pupils opted not to take part. Meanwhile, COs working in socio-economically disadvantaged areas noted that in some cases pupils were worried about going to new places, so the location of the enrichment activity was important for supporting participation.

“One school is probably 45 minutes in one direction. Another is sort of 35 minutes off to the west to the southwest. Another is 20 to 25 minutes to the South, another is 20 minutes to the north so geographically, working in partnership can be hard because of the rurality and the transport outside of school. So, getting learners to different places at times that work for schools because they’re not taking them out of lessons is harder when it’s a 40-minute drive to get them to that place and a 40-minute drive afterwards, and suddenly it’s 6:30pm and they [the pupils] don’t want to be doing that.”

[Coordinating organisation]

In some areas the needs assessments helped COs to identify that local enrichment provision was strong, but that young people were not aware of the activities on offer. In these areas COs felt it was key to raise awareness of existing activities rather than necessarily offering something new.

“I think a lot of the time a lot of young people in [the area] are like not aware of what’s going on, to be honest, in the community, or in their schools, [and] not understanding the benefit of enrichment opportunities.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Young people’s mental health was also a consistent theme identified by COs from their needs assessments. They noted from discussions with pupils that mental health was both a barrier to participating in enrichment activities and something pupils wanted support with through enrichment activities.

“The mental health aspect...I’ve found is a bit of a barrier for young people nowadays; to actually come and like access activities, they’re a bit more like unwilling to participate because they’re just wanting to get to school. And...that’s their capacity [that is all they can manage]”

[Coordinating organisation]

COs also reported that school staff had told them they did not want access to enrichment activities to be based on good behaviour, as this frequently excluded pupils they felt would benefit most from taking part in these activities. They also wanted enrichment activities to be made more inclusive by making them part of the school day.

“One thing that came out was they [teachers] don’t want enrichment to be the reward, behaviour based, because often it is and the kids who probably don’t behave as well [that] don’t have access to it but they are probably the kids who have more to deal with at home or live in more deprivation and have more stuff going on, which is why they are behaving poorly in school but they would get so much more out of it that the kids who do behave well.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Overall, stakeholders felt the needs assessments had been successful, and COs had collected a large volume of data to inform their delivery. The next step was for

COs to put this learning into practice to inform enrichment delivery by finding, or in some cases delivering enrichment activities themselves. For example, one of the COs who found that young people needed support around mental health/wellbeing in their needs assessment talked about how they had used this information to source suitable enrichment providers to support with this.

“[...] a lot of the feedback from young people and staff has been around that kind of mental health and well-being and resilience, which we know is affecting young people. So again, we’ve got some great enrichment providers who are coming in to deliver those talks to young people and offering like 1-to-1 mentoring.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Stakeholders^{[\[footnote 10\]](#)} did have some concerns that in a small number of cases where the CO was an enrichment provider and delivering enrichment as part of the EPP, the intended focus of enrichment provision was being driven to some extent by the usual focus of the CO’s work. While this had some advantages as it meant that COs had the experience, skills, knowledge and connections to deliver enrichment activities themselves, it was felt by stakeholders that it was important this work was complemented by learning from the needs assessments. The delivery partners therefore encouraged these COs to also draw on other enrichment providers to support enrichment delivery of activities the CO could not undertake themselves, which helped alleviate these concerns.

It is also important to note that in addition to undertaking initial needs assessments, some of the COs continued to capture and use pupil voice throughout the pilot activities, ensuring codesign continued throughout the project. For example, some COs trained pupils to quality assure enrichment activities. This involved training pupils to observe enrichment activities, to talk to the pupils attending the enrichment activities and get their views, and then to provide feedback about the quality of the activities being offered to the providers. In these cases, the COs expected providers to act on pupils’ feedback and make alterations to their enrichment delivery accordingly. The approach of training pupils to talk to other pupils and get feedback on the enrichment activities was felt to have helped pupils share their views more honestly than they would have done with adults. This in turn was felt to have helped ensure the activities were high quality.

4.5 Based on learning from the needs assessments, COs used a range of approaches to identify and recruit enrichment providers

COs approached and selected enrichment providers based on learning from the needs assessments. Delays to signing up schools to the pilot and the knock-on impact this had on the needs assessments also resulted in delays to recruiting enrichment providers to the pilot. This meant that the recruitment of some enrichment providers continued to take place over the school summer holidays until autumn 2024.

COs identified potential enrichment providers from within their own existing networks, recommendations from colleagues/partner organisations and by undertaking their own research and then contacting these organisations directly. COs reported that enrichment providers were generally positive about the programme and were keen to build stronger connections with schools, as some had tried unsuccessfully to connect with schools in the past.

However, some COs found that contacting enrichment providers could be challenging as many did not have websites and it could be hard to obtain contact details. They also found that enrichment providers did not necessarily have funding to enable them to deliver activities in schools, while schools did not have the budget to pay enrichment providers to deliver. Furthermore, sometimes enrichment providers were already at capacity, so could not offer any additional delivery.

5. Results: Role of the delivery partners in the pilot

5.1 The roles of each delivery partner were clear to COs and stakeholders

All COs and stakeholders had a clear understanding of the distinct roles and responsibilities of the 2 delivery partners (DofE and NCST). They recognised that NCST had led the recruitment of COs and continued to lead the grants management aspect of the project throughout the pilot. This involved ensuring that the COs were

accountable for the activities they had specified in their application to be part of the pilot. They also ran the Centre of Learning meetings, which was one of the networking opportunities for COs organised by the delivery partners during the pilot. The Centre of Learning involved bringing together all the COs to reflect on their experiences of the EPP and consider learning for future projects (see [Chapter 1](#) for more details).

Meanwhile, DofE was viewed as the ‘on-the-ground’ delivery support. DofE hired Partnerships Officers to be the main point of contact and delivery support for the COs. They also led the Regional Hub meetings, where COs in each region could come together to discuss any challenges they were experiencing and problem-solve together ([see also Section 5.2](#) for more details about the networking opportunities provided as part of the EPP). The Partnerships Officers joined the pilot in April 2024, however by this point much of the initial set up and needs assessment work was in progress. The delivery partners noted that they had initially intended to have these roles in place much earlier, but administrative delays with the requested budget reprofile for the funding to support the delivery of the programme delayed in their ability to recruit these roles.

The roles of the delivery partners remained broadly consistent throughout the set-up and delivery phases and both organisations met with the COs on a regular basis throughout the pilot. NCST played a larger role during the set-up phase as they led the recruitment of COs to the project, whereas DofE took on a larger share of the work in the delivery phase due to the change in focus of the EPP activity towards delivery in schools. Towards the end of the delivery phase, DofE also took on some additional work to support NCST after the closure of NCST was announced ([see Introduction](#)). However, NCST continued to run the Centre of Learning meetings, the last of which coincided with the end of the pilot period.

5.2 COs felt the networking activities organised to bring together COs and share learning had been helpful

The delivery partners ran a series of networking opportunities to bring together COs and share learning. This included the Centre of Learning meetings led by NCST, which aimed to bring together all COs to reflect on learning from the pilot and identify best practice, as well as the regional Hub meetings led by DofE where the COs in each region (North East, North West, East of England) could come together (in-person or online) and discuss the implementation of the project.

COs also found the collaboration opportunities provided via the regional hub meetings^{[\[footnote 11\]](#)} and Centre of Learning^{[\[footnote 12\]](#)} meetings helpful because these meetings allowed them to meet other organisations taking part in the pilot, share experiences, and learn from each other.

“The hub meetings have been really useful... They’ve just been really, really good on loads of levels. Again, that kind of sharing practice, sharing experiences, sharing where things are up to, getting ideas from other people, getting support from other people, finding out about providers, we’ve done it quite a bit across [geographic area] where people have been like, oh, did you know about these [enrichment providers]? And people are like, oh, no, no, I didn’t. So, sharing that’s been really useful as well because we cover a similar area quite a lot of us.”

[Coordinating organisation]

These meetings also led to some COs collaborating with each other, if for example, they were working in nearby or overlapping geographic areas.

“They [hub meetings] have been really useful, actually... We’ve [COs] met up independently. Just to chat about how we’re all doing as well, which has been really useful to kind of talk about similar challenges and find out what people have had or used or support they’ve had to kind of overcome them challenges.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Overall, these two types of networking opportunities were felt to complement each other well, although a few COs felt that the local hub meetings were more helpful than the Centre of Learning. This was because the smaller groups in the hub meetings made it easier to share challenges and discuss potential mitigations in real-time, whereas the Centre of Learning was more of a reflection opportunity. There were also some organisations that found it difficult to attend the in-person Centre of Learning meeting, because although it was held in a central location, it was still a long way geographically from where they were based. In addition, there were some isolated comments that although the talks from some of the guest speakers used at events were interesting, they were not that relatable to the situations and/or

young people the COs were working with.

“I think the guest speakers for me, obviously work with very different people than what we work with. So, although it was very inspiring what they’ve done with young people as part of the enrichment activity, it was a little bit unreal for us, ‘cos we work with [young people], who could never afford to [do those types of trips].”

[Coordinating organisation]

5.3 Coordinating organisations were very positive about the support they received from the delivery partners throughout the pilot and the role of the Partnerships Officers was highly valued

Overall, COs were very positive about the support they had received from the delivery partners as they felt they could ask for anything they needed. They were particularly complimentary about the Partnerships Officers who they reported had been approachable and helpful. They also valued the Partnerships Officers’ understanding and experience of working with schools, which was felt to have helped them connect with and recruit local schools during the set-up phase.

“So [the Partnerships Officer] is our link there with the DofE. She’s been really fantastically supportive and given us some really great ideas[...].”

[Coordinating organisation]

COs also appreciated the help they had received from Partnerships Officers to overcome challenges they experienced during the delivery phase of the project.

“It’s been really good, really, really strong, really effective. It’s been really useful in terms of kind of ideas, support. Because it’s been hard at times, and it’s been quite frustrating at times, but also quite disheartening...

you're doing loads and you think I'm not knocking at a closed door, but you're getting nothing back from schools. So,...it was really valuable to have that kind of support from both [NCST] and [DofE Partnership Officer], and that's been very useful."

[Coordinating organisation]

However, while all COs appreciated the Partnerships Officers, a subgroup of COs who had particularly struggled with recruiting schools felt that they had needed the support earlier and had that been available it would have been more helpful. As noted in [Section 5.1](#), this support was intended to have been in place sooner, but delays getting the delivery budget reprofile signed off meant that this could not happen.

"I think the only thing is with DofE, the main support [Partnerships Officers] came on later on, in April and at that point of time...we've been trying to engage with schools for a couple of months and I think yeah, that it was only a bit later on that we found like we had that support. Obviously, that was really helpful. But if we had it just a little bit earlier, I think we would have like benefited from it a bit better."

[Coordinating organisation]

In addition, there were instances of COs reflecting that having 2 delivery partners increased the volume of meetings they were expected to attend, and in some cases, this was felt to have resulted in some duplication. Among these COs, there were some who also felt the delivery partners' expectations in terms of reporting were too high and that the number of meetings could take away from them delivering the project.

"We also had [delivery partner] who wanted to meet weekly and that was just...way too intense. I was spending a day a week just meeting.... And I'm like, "Can you just leave me to do the work please?" I think it was too intense what [was] set up for a programme that was only a year long, and what they wanted to do, and monitor was really intense."

[Coordinating organisation]

It was also suggested that having template documents containing information about the pilot that could readily be shared with schools and/or enrichment providers would also have been helpful.

“So there is things that could have could have happened [to help with contacting schools]. We could have had standardised PowerPoints [with information about the pilot] maybe at the beginning where you know, because again we had to develop everything.”

[Coordinating organisation]

5.4 Early on there were some differences in expectations about the pilot

The main challenges reported by, and related to, the delivery partners were early on in the set-up phase of the EPP and centred on the differing expectations of the different organisations involved in the EPP. The first challenge was that it took some time at the beginning of the EPP for key stakeholders to have the same shared vision and understanding of the pilot and what it aimed to achieve. However, these differences were felt to have been overcome in the Theory of Change workshops which helped ensure everyone had a shared understanding of the EPP.

“I also think that at times there’s been some confusion between what different stakeholders have expected from the pilot or what they thought the ambitions were, and that took some ironing out, which was really helped by the Theory of Change workshops that were done early on that did help, but certainly I found that there were some teething issues with just making sure everyone was clear on different aspects of what was expected I suppose through the course of the pilot.”

[Stakeholder]

Building on this, it was suggested that for future projects, having a bank of materials about the pilot that all the key participants (delivery partners, COs, schools,

enrichment providers) could access would be helpful for ensuring a shared understanding of the pilot and its aims.

The second challenge was the cross-over in expectations between the delivery partners and the evaluation partner in terms of data collection from schools and enrichment providers. COs were required by their grant agreements to complete a needs assessment with schools in their local area. However, both the timing and type of activities overlapped with the data being collected by NFER's evaluation. Stakeholders felt that this overlap stemmed from the recruitment of the delivery partners and evaluation partner at different times, combined with the tight timelines, which meant that alternative options, such as shared data collection tools, could not be considered.

Finally, there appeared to be some mismatch in expectations around the delivery partners' reporting requirements to DCMS and DfE (such as around progress and potential risks) and the COs reporting requirements to the delivery partners. However, it was also acknowledged that because the EPP was a pilot, everyone was continuously learning, which led to reporting requirements evolving overtime.

6. Results: What did delivery of the EPP look like

6.1 COs used different delivery models

COs approached the pilot in a variety of different ways, and this is reflected in the different delivery models used, which are described below. Note that some COs used a mixture of these different approaches.

One-to-one matching

One group of COs directly matched schools and enrichment providers. The COs that did this used learning from the needs assessments they undertook during the set-up phase of the EPP to match schools with enrichment providers they already knew, or to seek appropriate external enrichment providers and match them with schools. Some of these COs did initial introductions with schools and enrichment providers then left them to organise any delivery. Other COs went further and provided schools with individualised timetables of enrichment activities.

Building an enrichment website

These websites were designed to serve one of 2 purposes. Some used a 'sign-posting' approach and functioned as a catalogue of enrichment activities schools could browse and select activities from. The others were designed to be pupil-facing. The pupil-facing websites were intended to allow pupils to search for enrichment opportunities run outside of their school (for example, by a local enrichment provider) and log their enrichment participation and any skills they had developed. This data could then be used to generate an enrichment CV using artificial intelligence (AI). Some of the COs that chose to build websites supplemented this activity with other enrichment opportunities such as, inter-school competitions, while others focused exclusively on building the website.

COs delivering to schools

A subset of COs were enrichment providers themselves and used their facilities and/or staff to deliver enrichment activities to pupils. These providers tended to have facilities and/or skills schools did not (for example, outdoor pursuits, specialist facilities for pupils with SEND). Some of these COs provided training to school staff to enable them to lead similar activities going forwards, and/or supplemented their enrichment offer with input from other external enrichment providers.

Social action model

There was also an example of the EPP being run as a social action project in schools. Here, pupils from each participating school were invited to think about what kinds of enrichment activities would benefit their school community. This could be regular activities that took place each week or one-off events. The CO then worked with the pupils and school staff to make these activities a reality.

In addition to the above, there were some COs who, as part of their delivery model, provided funding to schools. In most cases this was designed to cover the costs of releasing each school's EPP lead to attend joint meetings for the programme. Schools that received this funding typically used it to support their enrichment delivery such as to pay for new or additional resources for enrichment activities.

6.2 The pilot resulted in small increases in the number of different activities schools offered and more hours of enrichment activities were available.

The school MI data was returned by around two-fifths of schools so needs to be treated with caution. However, it showed that at baseline, the median number of

different activity types (for example, sports, performing arts) schools offered was 10, with a range from 4 to 13. At follow-up, this increased to a total median number of 11 different activity types (range was also 4 to 13). Similarly, when we looked at the number of different activities (this could include multiple kinds of the same activity type for example, within sport: football, tennis, athletics) offered in the last complete week we found that this increased from a median of 23 different activities at baseline to 28.5 different activities at follow-up. Together this suggests that the pilot resulted in schools offering a small number of additional activities.

There was also evidence from the MI that the pilot resulted in schools offering more hours of enrichment activities. The school MI data indicates that the median number of hours of enrichment activities schools offered in the last complete week they delivered activities increased from 20 hours of activities to 26.5 hours of activities at follow-up. However, it is possible that schools offered fewer activities during the summer term, which is when the baseline data was collected, because of exams and some year groups not being in school.

Among schools that reported delivering each activity type, the times of day those activities were offered (for example, after school, at lunchtimes) were then explored. The prevalent pattern was that schools tended to offer more clubs after school than at any other time of the school day. For example, at follow-up, almost all schools that offered performing arts clubs and sports activities ran sessions after school (97% and 92% respectively)^{[\[footnote 13\]](#)}. In contrast, around half of schools offered these activities at lunchtime (49% performing arts and 58% sports) and a minority before school (5% performing arts, 20% sports). Around a quarter offered these types of activities as part of an enrichment session during the day (30% performing arts, 22% sports).

This pattern was largely similar across the activity types. For example, 79% of schools that offered STEM activities at follow-up reported delivering these activities after school, while 32% offered these activities at lunchtime. However, there were some activities that were more likely to be offered as part of an enrichment session during the day than others. Around a third of schools ran careers/life skills sessions (39%), youth club (36%), volunteering (32%) and outdoor or nature activities (32%) this way.

This data indicates that although prior to the pilot schools were already offering a range of different activities and that a substantial number of hours of activities were being offered, the EPP added value to schools' existing provision by allowing schools to:

- offer a small number of additional activities, resulting in a broader enrichment offer

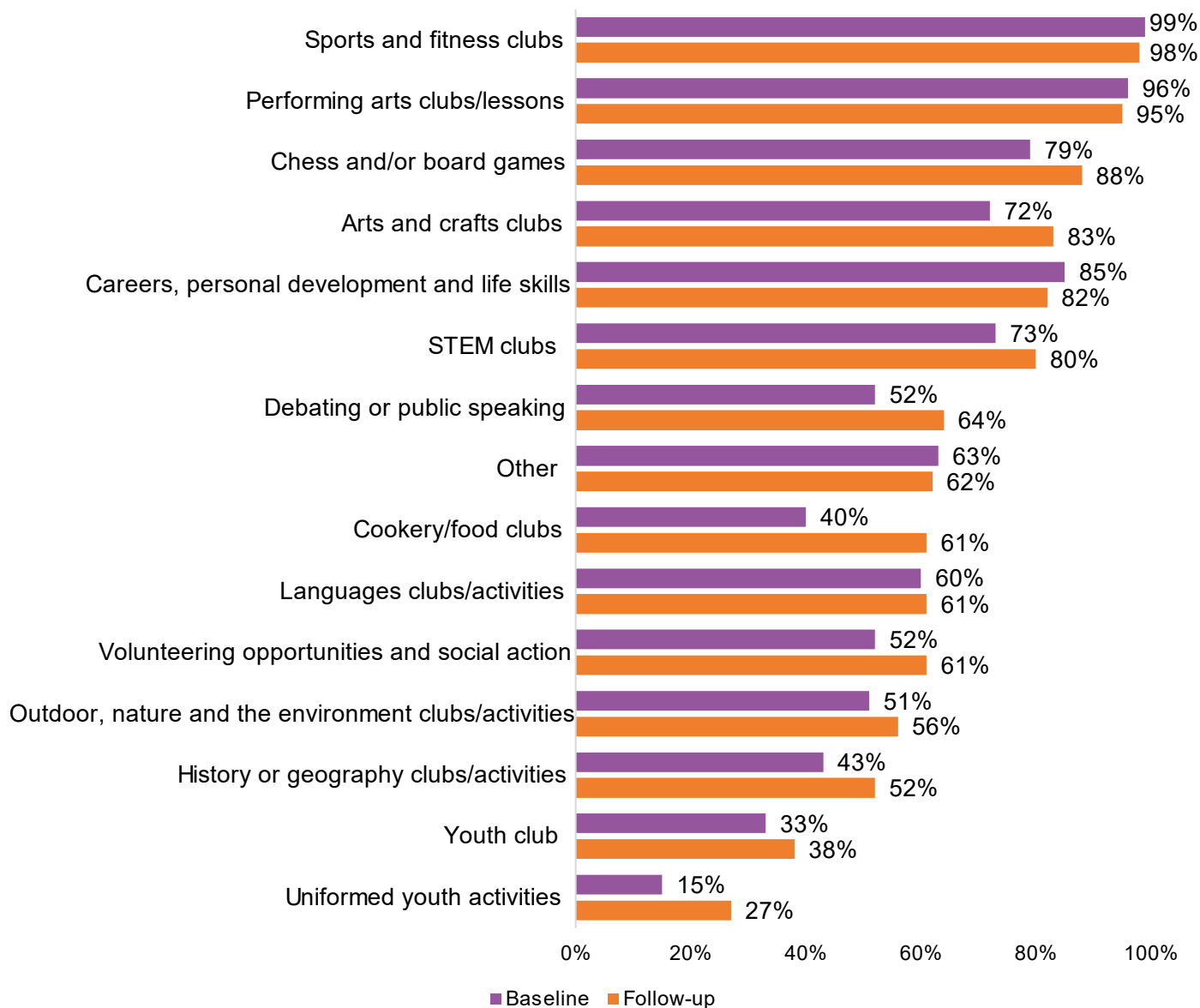
- receive additional funding which they used to purchase additional equipment/resources or pay external providers
- change the type of activities they offered based on learning from pupil voice activities

Almost all schools offered sports and performing arts activities at both time-points. However as shown in [Figure 4](#), changes were observed in relation to other activity types over the course of the EPP.

Overall, the proportion of schools offering each activity type generally increased^{[\[footnote 14\]](#)}. For example, in-line with learning from the needs assessments, cookery/food clubs were offered by a higher proportion of schools after the pilot (40% at baseline and 61% at follow-up).

Figure 4: Percentage of schools running each type of activity

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 67) and follow-up (N = 66) school MI templates. There were missing responses (between 1% and 11%) for all activity types. Missing responses were included in the total when calculating percentages. Activities are ordered by the percentage of schools running them at follow-up.

Some specific individual examples of activities that were introduced or enhanced (such as, more equipment) through the EPP included:

- dodgeball
- bungee fit
- climbing (with climbing wall)
- boxersize
- mandarin
- cooking
- crochet, arts and craft clubs

- lego club
- street doctors
- photography and animation workshops
- mock interviews
- trips to universities, museums
- inter-school competitions

COs, schools and pupils talked about the positive experiences that pupils had from taking part in these activities, which would not have been possible without the pilot:

“We took one cohort of Year 10s to a university. We paid for the coaches and got them there...just the fact that they got to go a university and see it. They may have had the university come out and talk to them, but the fact they could live and breathe it for a day...I don’t think you can put a value on that, and EPP created that value for young people.”

[Coordinating organisation]

“We had 3 days of doing things around photography...we did a workshop around stop motion animation, which was also linked into [landmark]. So, we were creating new posters and designs for the [landmark] and then animating that. And then...we went into [landmark] and took some photos around that, got a bit of history about it.”

“I haven’t done that many trips at school from primary and having trips there [to the landmark] was very exciting. ”

[Pupils talking about a photography and animation enrichment activity]

6.4 More schools indicated that they were using external enrichment providers after the pilot, but schools were still more likely to offer new enrichment

activities in-house

At both the baseline and follow-up timepoints, schools most commonly reported that enrichment activities were delivered in their school by teachers who volunteered to deliver them (92% baseline; 93% follow-up). At baseline, just over half of schools (56%) reported that their school used external providers to deliver enrichment activities. At follow-up, this proportion had increased to around two-thirds (67%) suggesting that the pilot resulted in more schools using external providers to deliver enrichment activities.

Furthermore, at follow-up we found that schools were more likely to have established links with external providers (45% at baseline, 72% at follow-up), and that school staff were more likely to have the time/capacity (31% at baseline, 48% at follow-up) and the skills (78% at baseline, 87% at follow-up) to deliver enrichment activities ([Figure 5](#)). However, the proportion of schools paying external providers to deliver enrichment activities remained the same (45%). In addition, while the survey indicated that school staff were more likely to have the time and capacity to deliver activities at follow-up, this was not something that emerged from the interview data.

Figure 5: Schools views about their enrichment offer before and after the pilot

Use zoom on your browser to view.

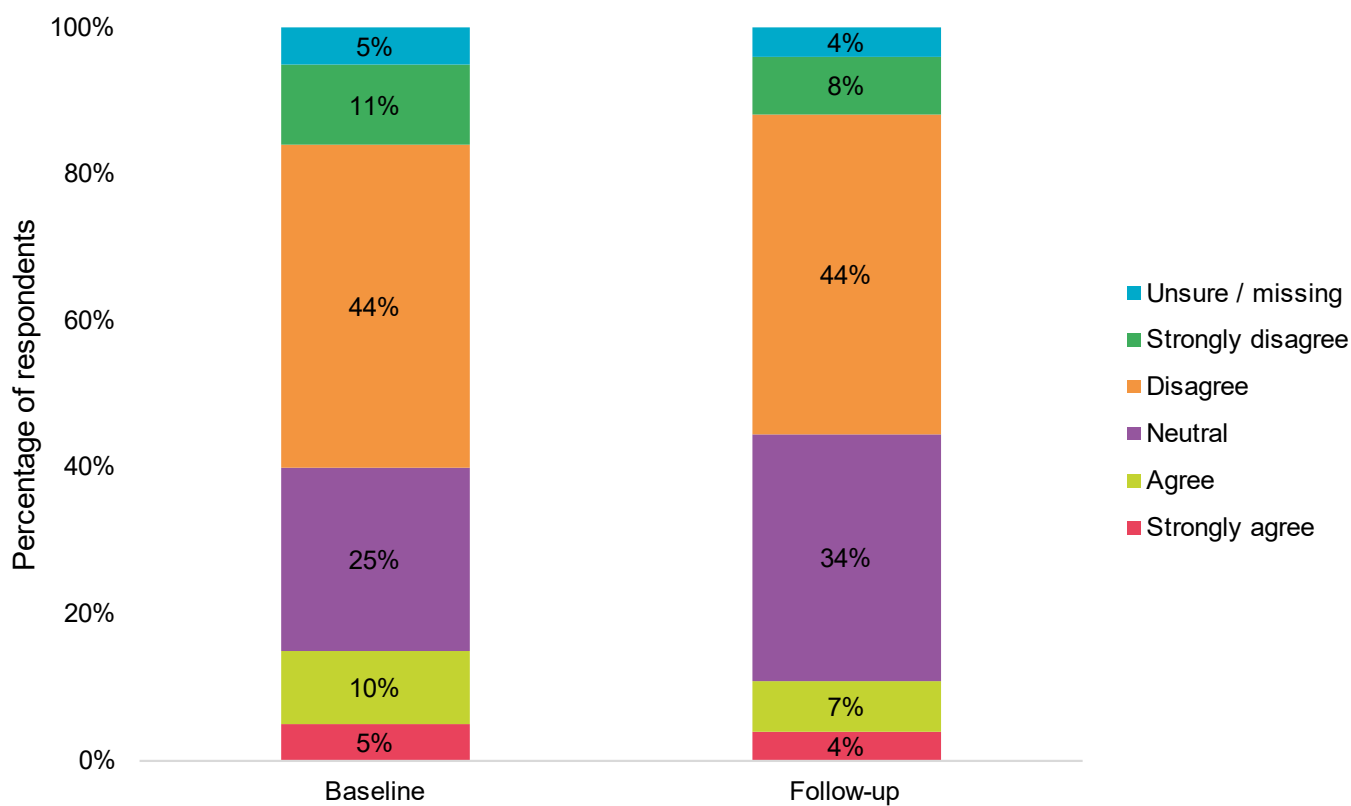
Data source: baseline (N = 107) and follow-up (N = 112) school surveys.

The school survey also indicated that, although schools were open to working with

more external providers in the future, if they wanted to run a new enrichment activity in the future, they were still more likely to use their own staff rather than engaging an external provider ([see Figure 7](#)). Schools were slightly more positive about the quality of the activities local enrichment providers could offer (54% felt the activities were high quality at the follow-up time point, compared with 42% at baseline), and had more knowledge of where to find local providers by the follow-up time point, but issues around funding and a lack of information persisted ([Figure 8](#)). For example, at the follow-up time point, 74% of schools still reported they would like more information about what local enrichment providers could offer (compared with 95% at baseline). Meanwhile, at follow-up, 42% of schools reported that they could not afford to use external providers (compared with 52% at baseline). More about barriers and facilitators can be found in [Chapter 7](#).

Figure 6: Likelihood of schools looking for an external provider rather than using their own staff to deliver new enrichment activities before and at the end of the pilot

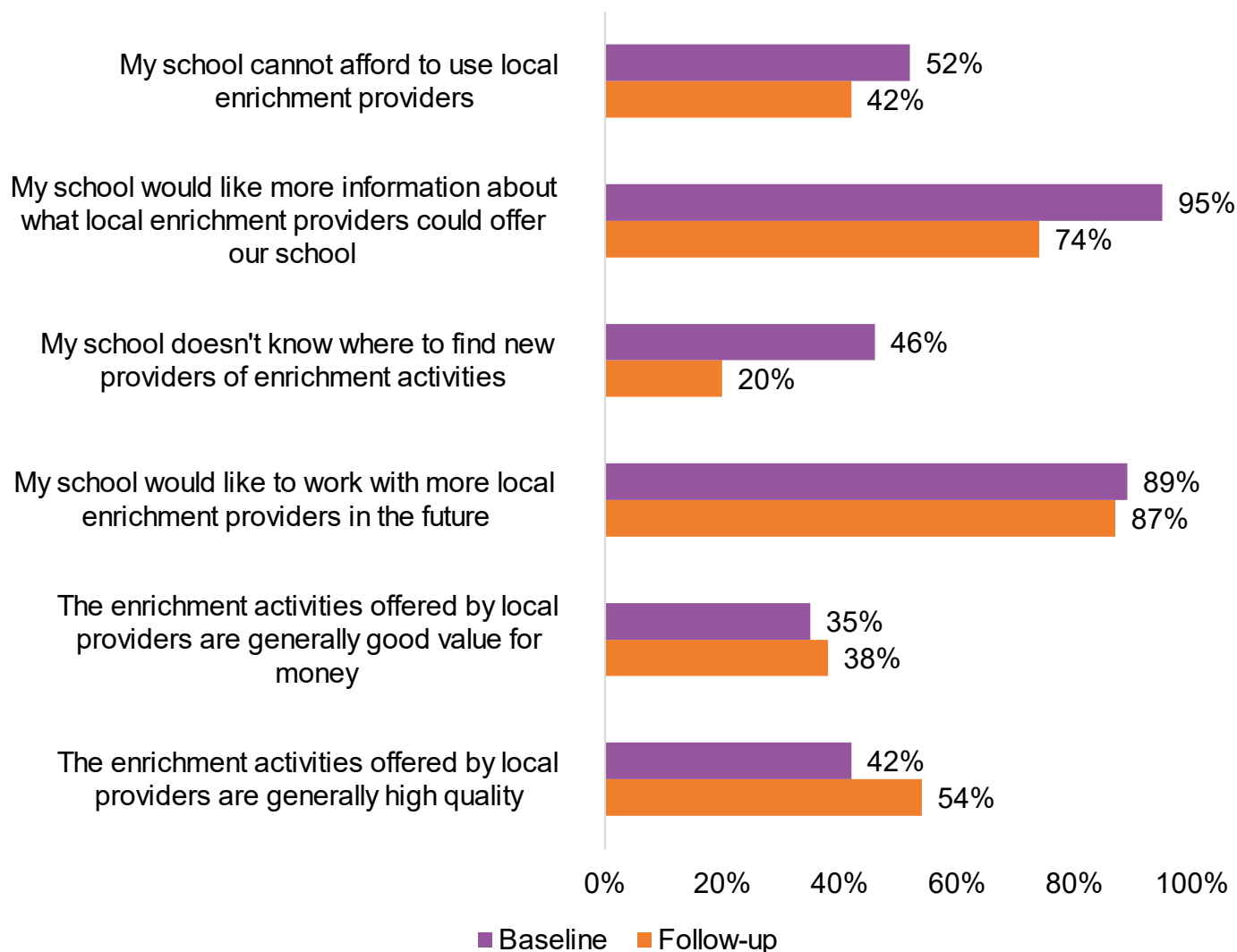
Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 107) and follow-up (N = 112) school surveys.

Figure 7: Schools’ views about external enrichment providers at baseline and follow-up

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 107) and follow-up (N = 112) school surveys.

6.4.1 Once activities started, they generally continued to be delivered across the course of the EPP, although uptake among schools varied

For most COs, enrichment delivery started in the latter part of the Autumn term 2024, or in some cases, in January 2025. Once activities began, they generally continued throughout the remainder of the delivery period (until the end of March 2025). There were some exceptions to this: for example, there were some enrichment opportunities that pupils participated in for a fixed time period (for example, 10 weeks). In some cases, this was due to the nature of the activity, in other cases it was the maximum amount of time that schools would allow pupils to come out of lessons to participate in an optional enrichment activity. In addition, COs discussed some differences in engagement from schools over the delivery phase which affected the uptake of activities. While one group of COs reported that all their schools remained engaged throughout the EPP, others reported that uptake of activities had fluctuated or that some of their schools had dropped out (see [Chapter 7](#) for barriers). In addition, there were specific challenges faced by a subset of COs where their EPP lead was on a fixed-term contract and left the role before the end of the pilot. This role was generally then covered by another internal member of staff in

addition to their other responsibilities. This meant they had less time available to specifically dedicate to the pilot and in some cases the connections with schools were also lost because schools were unfamiliar with the new contact. These COs were also wary of overcommitting when they knew the pilot funding was not going to be extended. Consequently, these COs tended to report that their delivery had tailed off towards the end of the pilot.

6.5 Enrichment providers also indicated they had delivered slightly more activities during the EPP

The enrichment provider MI templates indicated that at baseline, enrichment providers offered a median of 1 type of activity (for example, sports), which increased to a median of 2 different types of activities at follow-up. Similarly, the number of activities enrichment providers delivered in the last complete week they delivered activities also increased from a median of 1 to 2. The enrichment providers who completed the MI templates were generally specialist organisations who offered very specific kinds of activities, which is likely to account for the relatively low numbers here.

The number of hours of enrichment activities providers reported delivering also increased from a median of 2.5 hours at baseline to a median of 5.2 hours at follow-up.

Together, these results suggest that enrichment providers delivered slightly more activities during the EPP. However, the enrichment provider survey suggests that around one-third (32%) of enrichment providers reported that none of their delivery related to the EPP. The small sample size means that this result should be treated with caution. However, it is also possible this result explains the low MI template completion rates, as it is possible enrichment providers who did not deliver any activities as part of the EPP are also less likely to have taken part in the evaluation activities.

6.6 There was mixed evidence as to whether the EPP led to increased pupil participation in enrichment activities

The follow-up school survey indicated that 73% of schools felt that the total number of pupils participating in enrichment activities had increased because of the EPP. In addition, 60% felt that the EPP had resulted in increased participation for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils. This is further supported by comparing the survey results from baseline and follow-up. In the baseline survey, only 24% said that equal proportions of socio-economically disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils took part in enrichment activities, which increased to 39% at follow-up. Furthermore, the proportion of schools reporting fewer socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils participating in enrichment decreased from 50% at baseline to 39% at follow-up.

These results suggest the EPP resulted in an increase in enrichment participation from socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, although a disparity still persisted (see [Table 1](#)).

Table 1: Percentages by response option to school survey question ‘How does the participation of socio-economically disadvantaged pupils in enrichment activities offered by your school compare with non-disadvantaged pupils?’

	Baseline	Follow-up
More socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils take part in enrichment activities at my school than non-disadvantaged pupils	5%	6%
Fewer socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils take part in enrichment activities at my school than non-disadvantaged pupils	50%	39%
Socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils take part in enrichment activities equally to non-disadvantaged pupils	24%	39%
I’m not sure/missing	21%	15%

Data source: baseline (N = 107) and follow-up (N = 112) school surveys.

The qualitative findings are broadly consistent with the school survey data. There were examples of the EPP being reported to have led to increased pupil participation in enrichment activities, including for pupils who had not previously been involved in enrichment activities. This increase was attributed to having a wider range

of activities on offer which had a greater appeal to pupils and/or because clubs had new or improved equipment which enticed more pupils to participate.

“In the past year in particular, from being part of the pilot...the number of students that have been involved in enrichment that hadn’t before has increased because of the breadth that’s now offered.”

[School staff]

That said, it is important to note that this increased uptake amongst pupils was not universally observed across the case study schools. In addition, schools that had seen increased uptake acknowledged that in some cases the uptake of new activities had been slow, so the increases in pupil participation were relatively small. This was felt to be because pupils lacked confidence to try something new, especially if it was with an external staff member, or an activity their friends did not take part in (also see [Chapter 7](#) for pupil barriers to participation).

The results of the pupil survey present a slightly different picture and suggest that pupil participation in enrichment activities remained stable or declined over the course of the pilot. At both timepoints, pupils reported taking part in a median of 2 different kinds of enrichment activities, and the proportions of pupils who reported taking part in at least 1 enrichment activity either inside or outside of school also remained consistent (81%; [Table 2](#)), although the proportion of pupils saying they took part in at least 1 activity at school decreased slightly, from 57% at baseline to 55% at follow up. In addition, these results suggest that even at the end of the EPP almost 1 in 5 pupils (19%) did not take part in any enrichment activities.

Table 2: Proportions of pupils who reported that they took part in at least 1 enrichment activity

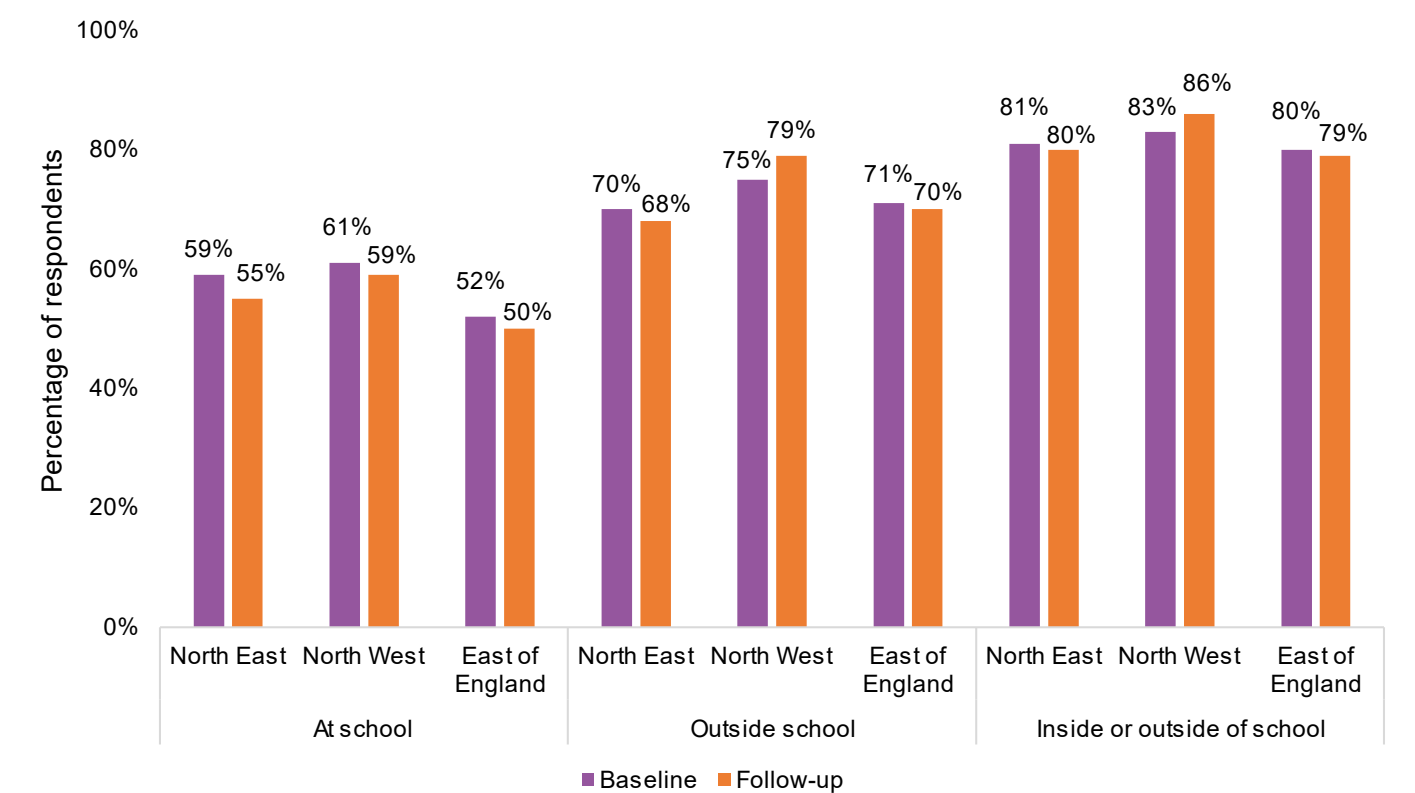
	At school	Outside school	Inside or outside school
Baseline	57%	71%	81%
Follow-up	55%	71%	81%

Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys.

When these results were broken down by region, the results were broadly similar.

There were some small variations between region in the percentage of pupils who reported participating in at least one 1 enrichment activity inside or outside of school at baseline. There was little change in enrichment participation between baseline and follow-up ([Figure 8](#)) with small decreases in the proportion of pupils participating in at least 1 activity observed for the East of England and North East, while a small increase was observed in the North West. In general, data from our case study schools indicated that uptake of enrichment activities by pupils appeared to be more related to the school or CO than the region.

Figure 8: Proportions of pupils who reported they took part in at least 1 enrichment activity inside or outside of school by region



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil survey.

Use zoom on your browser to view.

Meanwhile, the percentage of pupils who said they took part in each different enrichment activity type declined for most activities inside and outside of school ([see Figure 9](#)). For the remaining activities, participation generally stayed the same between time-points. However, it is important to note that in the pupil survey we were only able to ask about the broad activity type pupils were taking part in, such as sports. This means we were unable to see if pupils had taken up an additional activity within the same category (for example, if they already played football but took up basketball), which could account for the difference in results between the school and pupil surveys. The other difference for the pupil surveys was that the pupils had

moved up a year by the time of the follow-up survey, and for around half of the sample into Year 10 (Key Stage 4), which may have affected patterns of participation due to changes in curriculum and expectations as they entered their GCSE years. It is also important to recognise that the pupil survey was only conducted with 2 year groups within case study schools, so it is possible that the increases in participation reported by schools applied more to other year groups. The surveys also took place at different points within the school year. The baseline survey was conducted in the summer term of the academic year 2023 to 2024, while the follow-up survey was conducted in the spring term of the academic year 2024 to 2025. It is therefore possible that the time of year or seasonality influenced results.

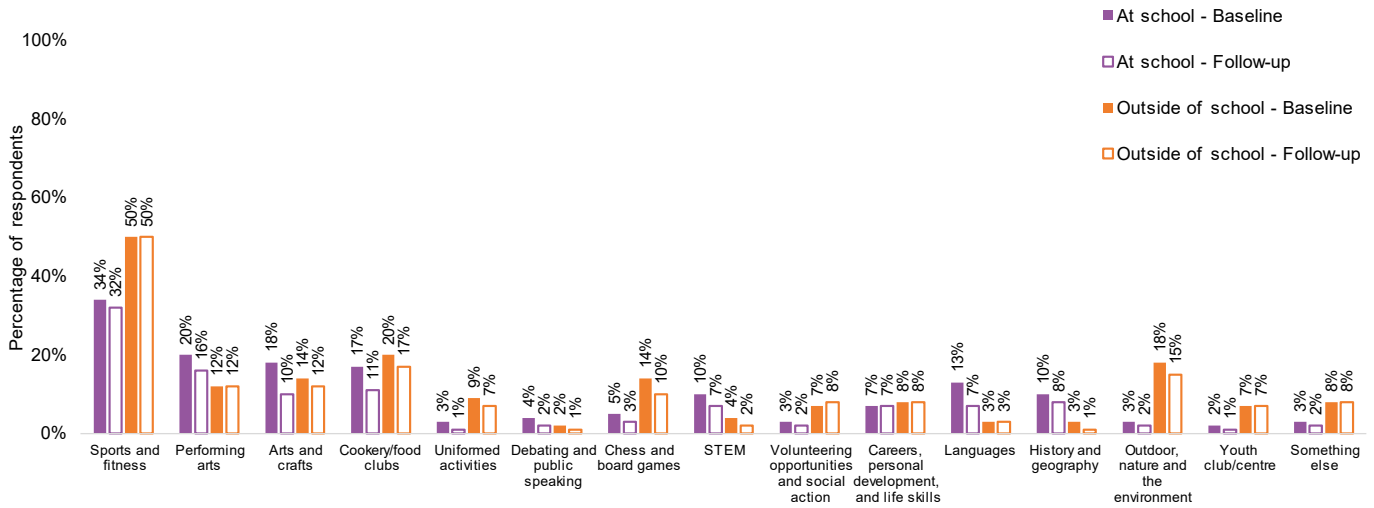
The school MI data was submitted by around 40% of schools and presents a mixed picture of pupil participation ([Figure 10](#)). For some types of activity such as sports, performing arts and careers, personal development and life skills, pupil participation was higher at follow-up. For other types of activity, participation was lower at follow-up (for example, debating and public speaking, youth clubs), or remained stable (such as volunteering and social action). It is important to note that the MI data was for snapshot weeks rather than across the whole term(s) and enrichment participation may fluctuate from week to week and that pupils could be taking part in more than one activity. This may explain why these results are more mixed than perceptions of participation in the school survey.

The enrichment provider survey indicated that enrichment providers' views were mixed, with 45% reporting that the EPP had led to an increase in the number of pupils taking part in their enrichment offer, while 38% reported no change.

Overall, this data presents a mixed picture as to the extent to which the EPP may have led to increased pupil participation in enrichment activities.

Figure 9: Percentage of pupils who reported that they participated in each type of enrichment activity

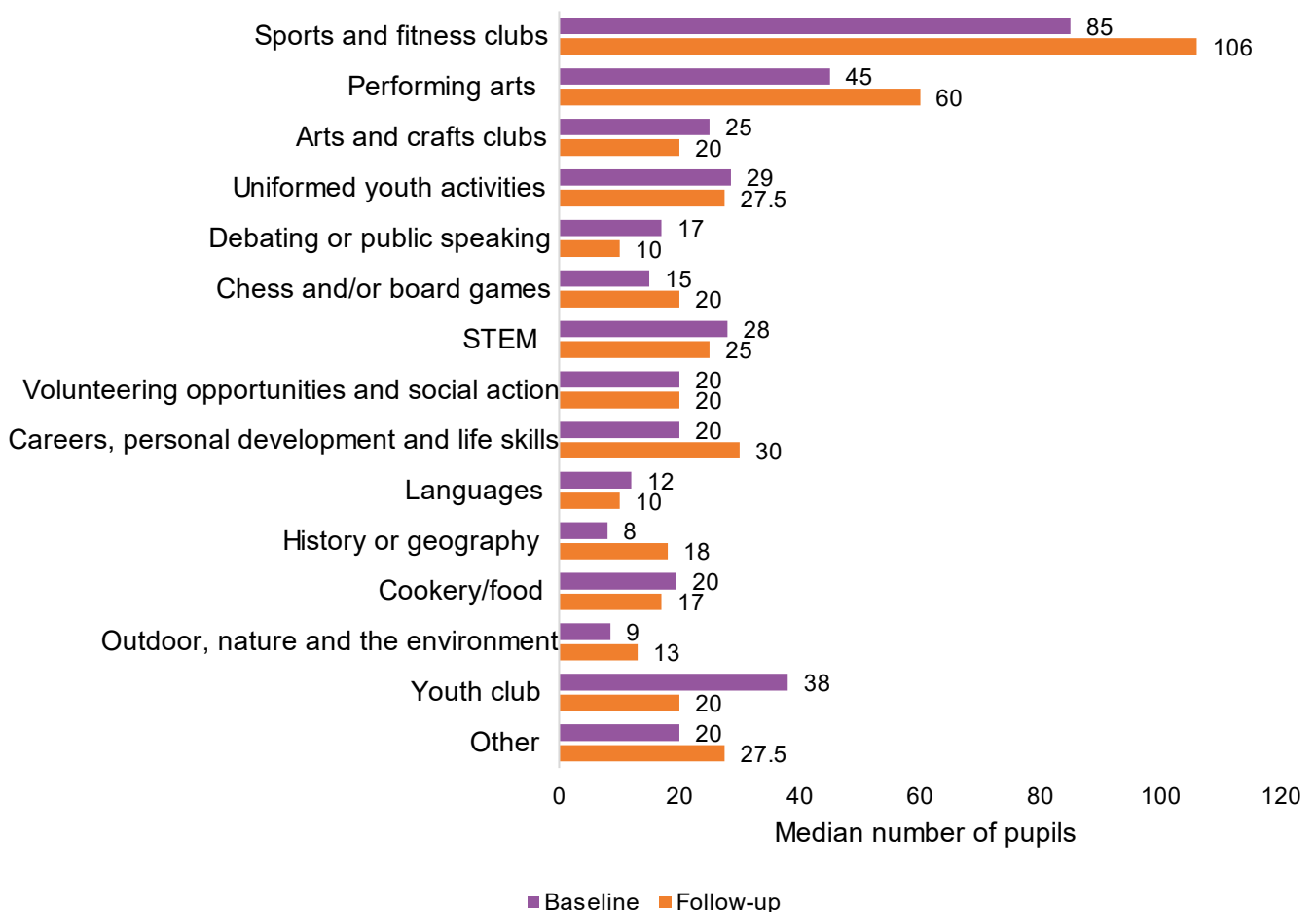
Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil survey

Figure 10: Median number of pupils who participated in school-based enrichment activities in the last complete week in which activities were offered

Use zoom on your browser to view.

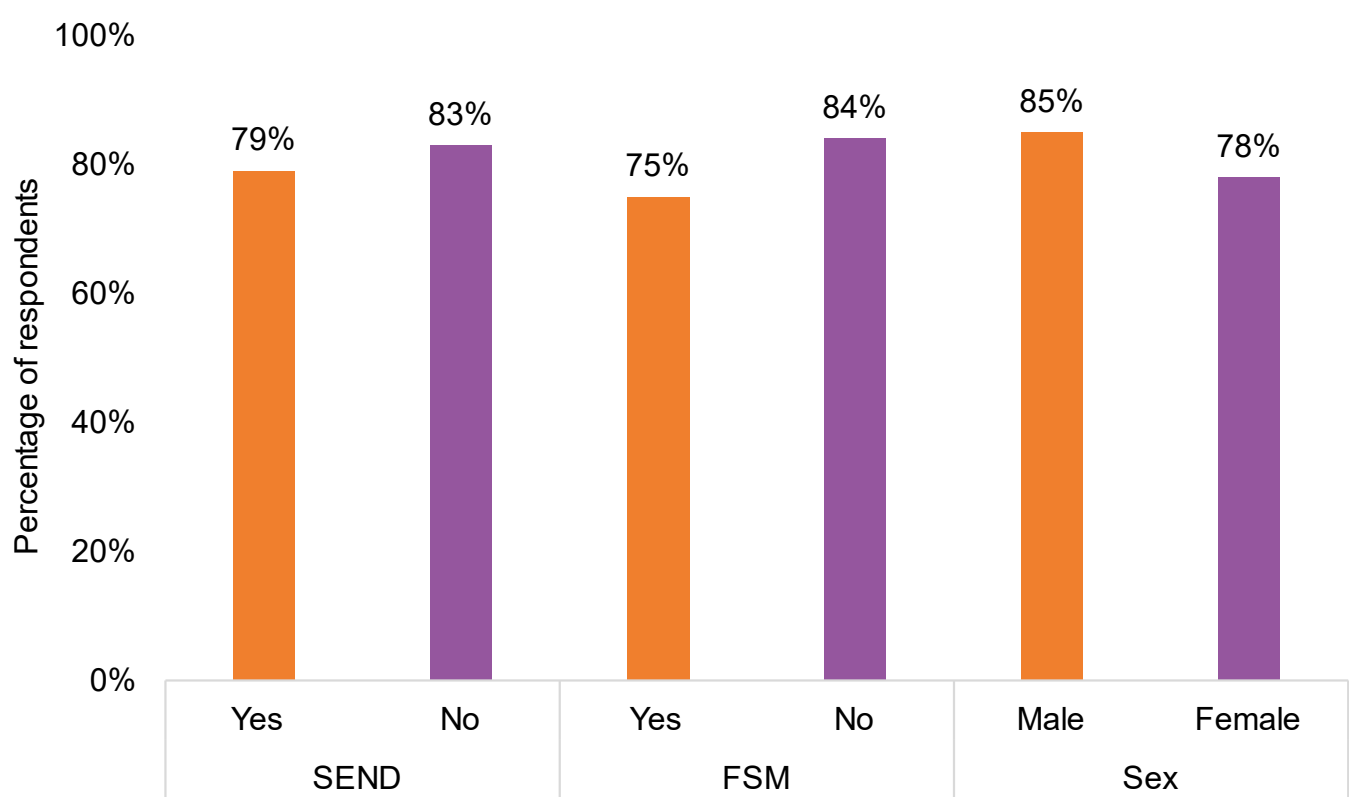


Data source: school baseline (N = 67) and follow-up (N = 66) MI.

There was some indication of differences in participation in enrichment activities for pupils with different characteristics^{[footnote 15](#)} ([see Figure 11](#)). The follow-up pupil surveys indicated that male pupils (85%) were more likely to take part in at least 1 enrichment activity inside or outside of schools than female pupils (78%). Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM pupils) were less likely to take part in at least 1 enrichment activity than pupils not eligible for FSM (75% compared with 84%). Pupils with SEND were also slightly less likely to take part in at least 1 enrichment activity than pupils without SEND (79% compared with 83%).

Figure 11: Percentage of pupils who took part in at least 1 enrichment activity by pupil characteristics

Use zoom on your browser to view.



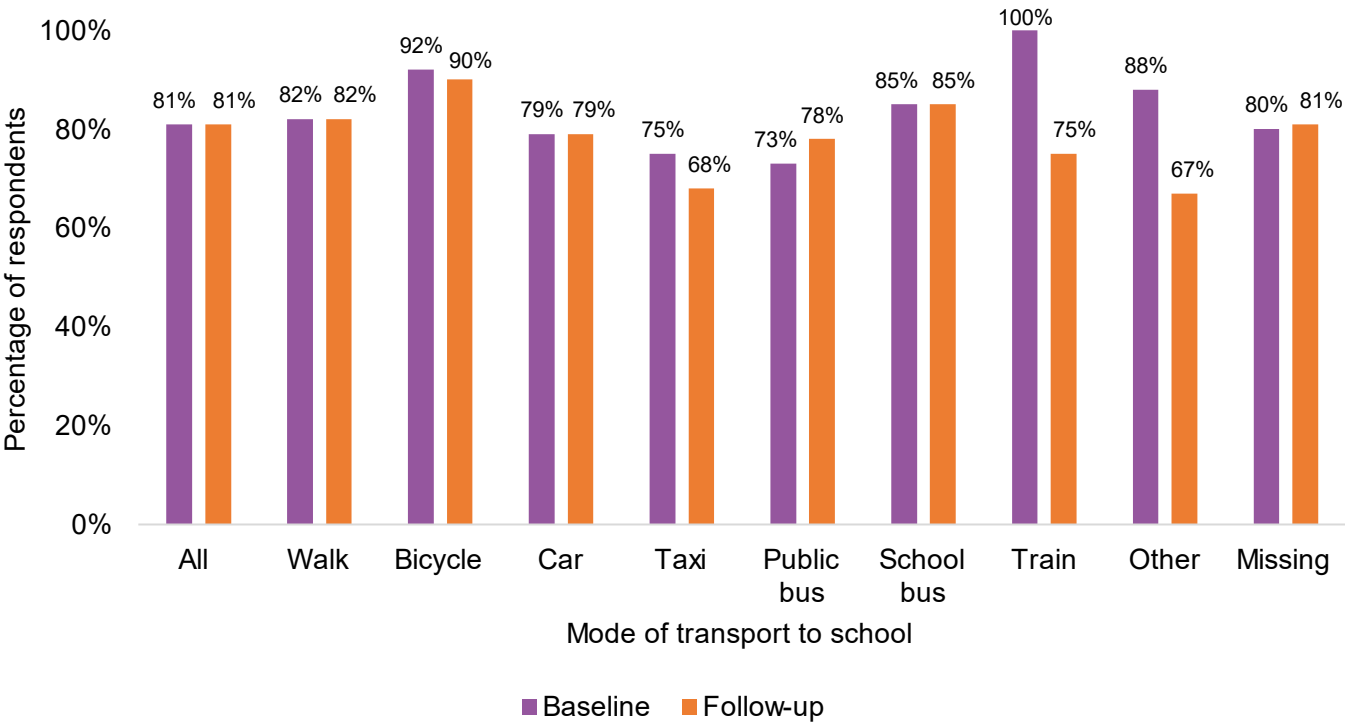
Data source: follow-up pupil survey (N = 4,177) and pupil background data.

The mode of transport pupils used to travel to school appeared to influence how likely they were to take part in at least 1 enrichment activity either inside or outside of school. At baseline, 75% of pupils who travelled to school by taxi and 73% of pupils who travelled by public bus reported taking part in enrichment activities, compared to 81% of pupils overall ([Figure 12](#)). Pupils using these transport methods were still less likely to take part in enrichment activities at the follow-up survey. This suggests that additional strategies to support pupils travelling by taxi and school bus may need to be considered. The survey data also suggests that, for pupils who travel to school

by train or another mode of transport, there was a large decline in the proportion taking part in enrichment activities between the baseline and follow-up surveys. However, there were only a small number of pupils who travelled to school by these modes of transport, meaning that a small change in responses (as observed here) equates to a large percentage change.

Figure 12: Percentage of pupils who took part in at least 1 enrichment activity by mode of transport to school

Use zoom on your browser to view.

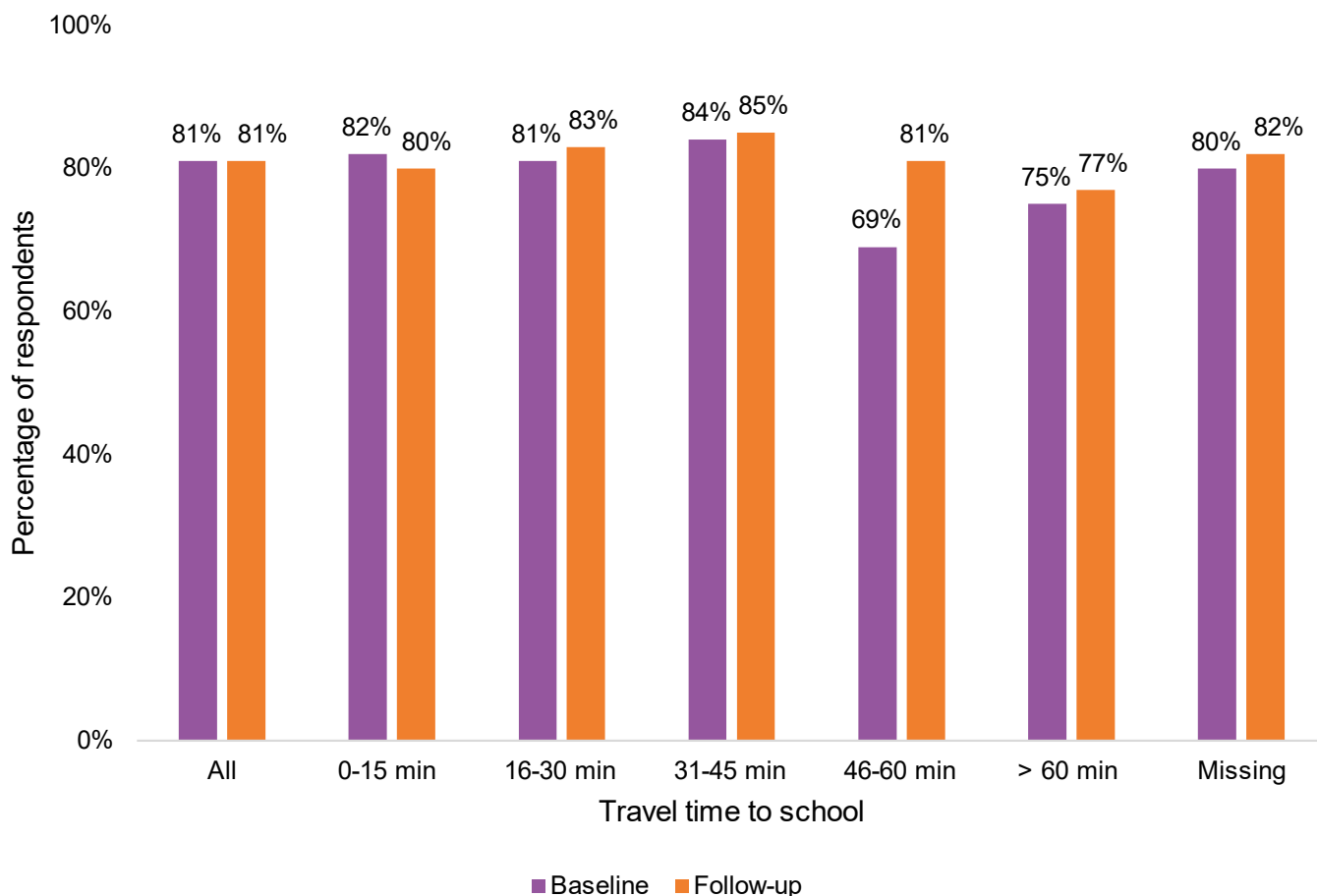


Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys. Note that the small sample sizes for ‘train’ and ‘other’ are driving the differences seen between baseline and follow-up here.

There were minimal differences in participation by time taken to travel to school, although as might be expected, pupils whose journey took more than an hour were slightly less likely (75% at baseline, 77% at follow-up) to take part in enrichment activities than pupils overall (81%) ([Figure 13](#)). There was also small increase in the number of pupils who travelled between 46 and 60 minutes to school taking part in at least one enrichment activity between baseline and follow-up.

Figure 13: Percentage of pupils who took part in at least 1 enrichment activity by travel time to school

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys

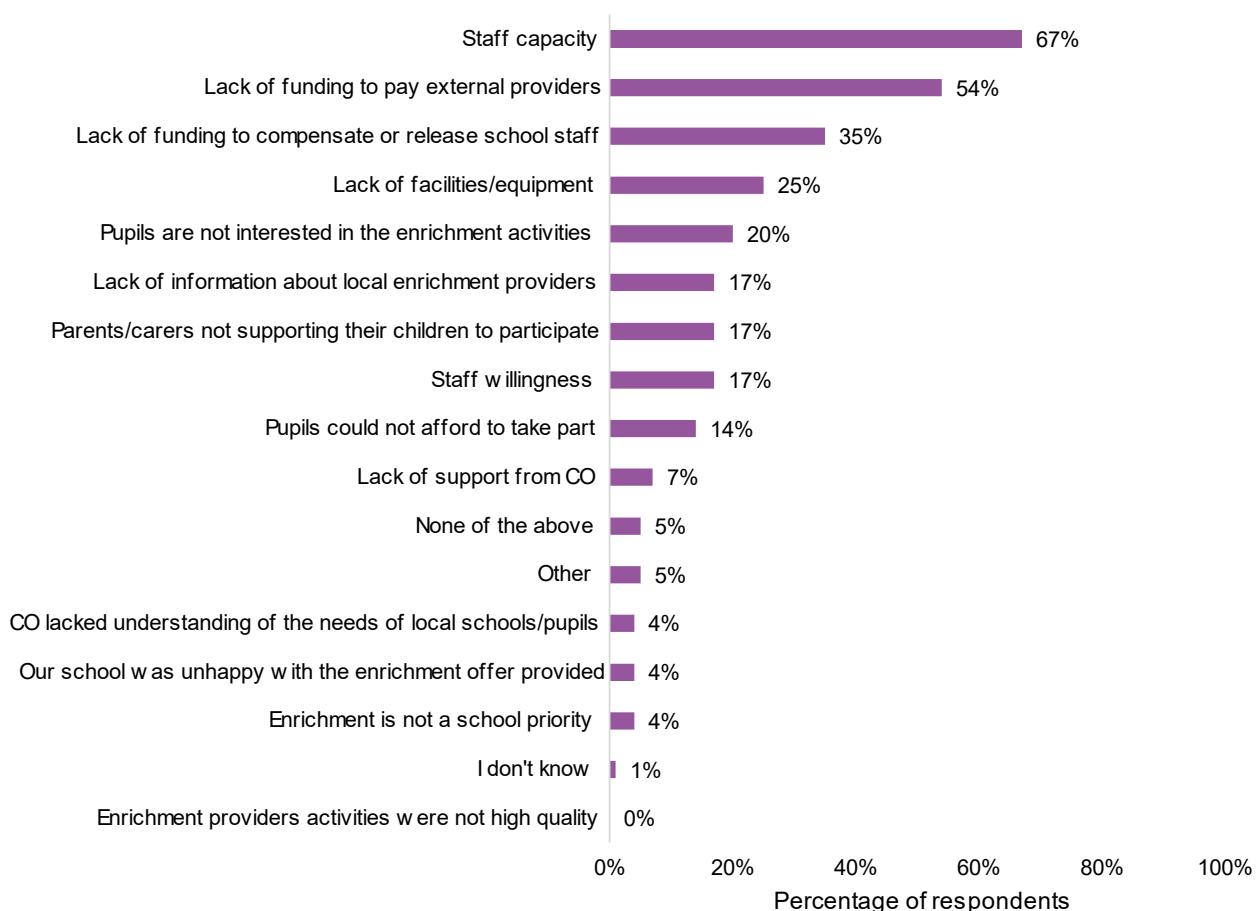
7. Results: Barriers and facilitators to EPP implementation and pupil participation

7.1 What were the main barriers to EPP implementation

The school survey indicated that the biggest barriers schools experienced to implementing the EPP were staff capacity (67%) and lack of funding to pay for external enrichment providers (54%) - [see Figure 14](#).

Figure 14: Schools' views about the main challenges to EPP implementation

Use zoom on your browser to view.

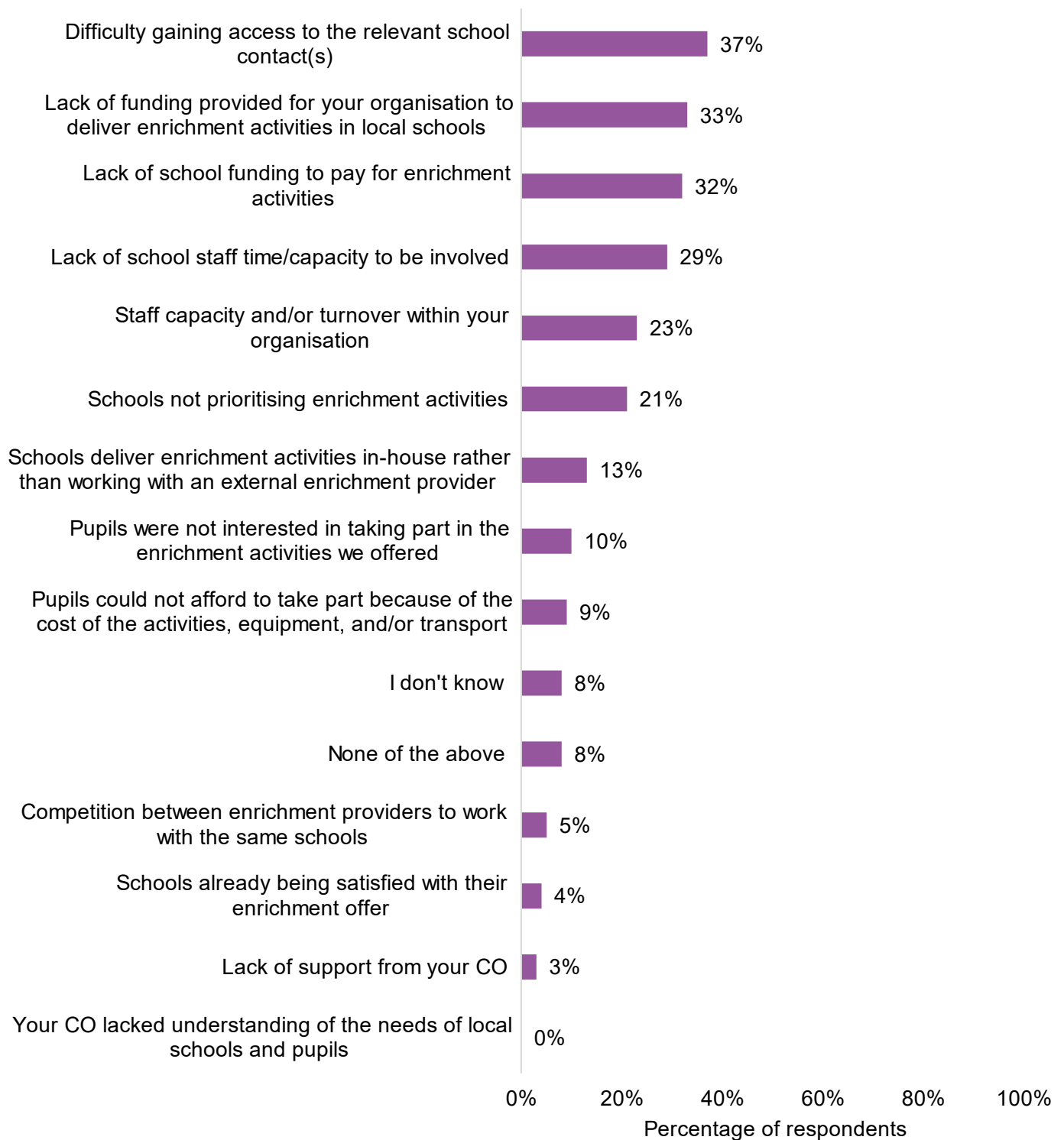


Data source: school follow-up survey (N = 112). Note that participants could select up to 3 options from the list shown in the figure.

Meanwhile, the follow-up survey of enrichment providers revealed that they felt that the main barriers to successful implementation were getting access to school contacts (37%), followed by lack of funding available for either the enrichment provider (33%) or the school (32%) to pay for enrichment activities ([see Figure 15](#)).

Figure 15: Enrichment providers' views about the barriers to EPP implementation

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: enrichment provider survey (N = 78). Note that participants could select up to 3 options from the list shown in the figure.

The qualitative data identified similar barriers to EPP implementation, as well as some additional ones, which are summarised below.

7.1.1 The pilot timescales were too short and did not fit well with the timing of the school year

Challenges with the project timescales were consistently reported across interviewees throughout the EPP. Many of these challenges arose from the EPP

funding being linked to the financial year (ending in March) rather than an academic year (ending in July). This had several implications. Firstly, the set-up phase of the pilot and the needs assessments undertaken by the COs coincided with exam periods during the summer term. In some cases, this meant that the needs assessments were much more challenging for COs to undertake and/or needed to be delayed until September, which further delayed project timescales. Secondly, schools reported that they set their enrichment timetables for each September before the preceding school summer holidays, so the results of the needs assessments undertaken by the COs in spring/summer were not available until after schools had completed their planning. This meant that activities based on learning from the needs assessment could not begin until later in the autumn term or in some cases January 2025. Finally, the 1-year funding period resulted in enrichment activities running for a maximum of 2 terms, which the delivery partners as well as most COs and schools felt was insufficient for the pilot outcomes to be achieved. A few schools reported that they only began new enrichment activities with new providers at the point the pilot was ending, while others had not yet started.

“The time frames were far too short. We had the CO come in to do the focus groups in September and then they went away to try and find some providers and then we’ve had one or maybe 2 sessions and it’s [the EPP] done.”

[School staff]

7.1.2 Schools lacked funding to pay for external enrichment providers and enrichment providers did not have funding to enable them to deliver activities for free

Multiple stakeholders felt that there needed to be more funding for extra-curricular activities, and that this had not been addressed by the EPP because of the way in which funding was distributed to focus on the coordination of activities. During the EPP, funding was allocated to the COs to coordinate the provision, but not to schools or enrichment providers to run the activities. However, a small number of COs provided schools with money to pay for staff cover for the enrichment lead to attend meetings or to support with equipment for enrichment activities.

It was clear from respondent feedback that many schools could not afford to pay for external enrichment providers, and enrichment providers did not necessarily have the funding to enable them to offer activities free of charge to schools on an on-going basis, even if they were able to offer free taster sessions. School staff,

especially those working in schools located in more socio-economically disadvantaged areas, also noted that they could not pass on the costs of activities to parents/carers because they could not afford to pay for them, meaning pupils would miss out.

“You know, schools haven’t got funding to pay enrichment providers to go in, and some of the enrichment providers haven’t got funding to go into schools and be able to do that. So, I think funding to do it was a big barrier as well.”

[Coordinating organisation]

The lack of funding also limited participation in activities off-school premises as schools could not pay for transport to take pupils to activities:

“[...]with these types of programmes, [transport and cover is] often the barrier actually. It’s a lot easier to take a class out than to take 16 [pupils] out, because then I don’t have to run cover, but it’s a case of having transport...I don’t know how the funding works for this programme, but I don’t think funding considers that transport element. How to improve the programme - if some of the funding was syphoned towards a transport budget to pay for a bus.”

[School staff]

Even when there was a free enrichment offer available, at times schools did not have the additional money to pay for resources needed to take it up:

“We were going to be taking part in their gaming competition as well [offered by the EPP]. It was our intention to take part in that. We just don’t quite have, let’s say, have the resources for that. [Named other school] had the gaming computers, which obviously are slightly different from the regular desktop. We have a beautiful suite of computers. In fact, we’ve last year we spent £40,000 on a new suite of computers. So, it’s not that we don’t have it equipment, but obviously a gaming computer requires much more, so that would have touched on our finances a bit.”

[School staff]

In a small number of cases, COs gave money to schools for resources or to pay for cover to release school staff to attend meetings. Generally, this money was used to pay for equipment and/or activities, but this only applied to a limited number of schools who were working with specific COs.

7.1.3 There was limited school staff capacity to successfully implement the EPP including to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements were in place

Often, school staff and COs reported that the lack of dedicated enrichment personnel within schools meant that teaching staff or senior leaders took on the EPP lead role as additional workload. This was felt to have created challenges because school staff sometimes needed to focus on other priorities within the school such as behaviour or curriculum requirements, depending on the main priority areas for the school and the other responsibilities they held.

“Because for some of the schools, because, for example behaviour or like getting young people’s exclusions down or whatever is their priority, enrichment is sort of lower down for them [in terms of priorities] at the moment.”

[Coordinating organisation]

“With some schools there’ll be a direct point of contact who oversees that work and is therefore the best person to speak to, in others you already know you’re going to be trying to communicate with the head of department or a senior leader who’s it’s on their job description, but they’re not really doing it because there’s a million other things.”

[Coordinating organisation]

This meant that COs felt it could sometimes be difficult to receive responses, for example, when organising meetings, and in some cases, COs felt a lot of email prompting was required to keep schools on-board. There were also examples of COs feeling that access to schools was still being affected by previous COVID-19

pandemic restrictions, with schools reluctant to let external organisations onto the premises.

Issues with staff capacity were sometimes exacerbated by the timings of the pilot. For example, school staff had less capacity during exam preparation time which coincided with the needs assessments ([see Chapter 6](#)). Even when staff found the time to process and engage with the enrichment offers, in some cases the delay reviewing these offers meant the application deadlines may already have passed, the activity had already happened, or it was fully booked:

“So some of them [teachers] would put them [emails about offers] in a big pile and then maybe deal with them like every holiday. So like a six-week delay. And that meant some missed opportunities [...] or those were all fully booked by that point in that sort of delay.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Limited staff availability also meant that schools were not able to free up staff to run internal activities or leave the school premises to accompany students to activities run by external providers. This was primarily reported to be because there was no funding to pay for additional class cover.

“With staffing and supervision wise, some of those opportunities that are offered to us, we can’t do because I can’t spare staff to go over there to do that. And so, it’s been a real positive in the fact that we’ve been exposed to more opportunities, but we haven’t always been able to take them unfortunately.”

[School staff]

A further area where staff capacity had been a barrier was the time needed to undertake risk assessments and ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements were in place. This particularly applied to activities taking place off school premises and activities where external providers came to the school. Lengthy decision-making processes and risk assessment procedures meant that school staff could not take on these duties due to competing workloads which would result in the school being unable to take up the offer:

“It would help having the safeguarding mechanisms or an agreement in place that they [the CO] can supervise our kids...that would need to happen at an executive level within the MAT...That would make things easier if the [CO] could just say, right, we’re going to take 15 of your kids and we’re going to go somewhere fantastic. And I’ve not got to go [with them] – wonderful! But that’s not the case at the minute.”

[School staff]

Lastly, in line with the national picture of a high number of teachers leaving the profession, it was reported that a high staff turn-over and the moving of staff between roles within schools resulted in a break-down of communication and consistency:

“And then the member of staff who we were working with got seconded... Last I heard from him; he was handing it over to someone else. That other person never engaged properly with the project.”

[Coordinating organisation]

7.1.4 Linking compatible schools and enrichment providers was challenging for some COs at times

There were some COs who, having completed the needs assessments and identified potential enrichment providers, found it difficult to successfully link up enrichment providers to schools, which hampered delivery. For example, they found that schools could not accommodate the enrichment provider when they were available, or the enrichment provider was unable to go into schools and wanted schools to come to them instead. This created additional barriers for schools around transport ([see Section 7.1.5](#)) and staff capacity/cover. This meant that while COs reported that there was a lot of enthusiasm for the project, this did not always translate into enrichment delivery.

“One of the difficulties, though, was that sometimes even though the external providers said ‘yes, we’d love to be involved’, when I contacted them about an ask from a school it was, ‘oh, we can’t. We can’t do that. We can’t go there. You’ve got to come to us.’ And there was that mismatch of ability to try and hook the schools up with the external

providers.”

[Coordinating organisation]

7.1.5 Transport, particularly in remote or rural areas, was a key barrier to the take-up of activities during the pilot

Issues related to a lack of transport were identified by the COs in the needs assessments they undertook at the beginning of the EPP. However, transport remained a key barrier to participation throughout the EPP ([see Section 4.4](#)). School staff and COs consistently reported that activities which take place outside the geographical proximity of the school required a transport system that does not rely on parents or caregivers in order to be successful.

In schools, there was little to no funding for transport and even if the school had a minibus, they needed enough trained drivers. In addition, any use of minibuses meant that participant numbers for external activities (that is activities outside of school) were limited by the size of the available buses. Linked to the earlier point about funding, hiring coaches was not an option for schools because of the additional costs involved:

“So then you’re looking into cost. The hire of coaches and that’s where it all falls down then because they [schools] just don’t have the money to spend on the coach.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Transport also continued to be a barrier for in-house after-school activities, especially in more rural areas where pupils relied on the school bus to get home. This meant they could only attend after school activities if a parent/carer could pick them up or they could use public transport. There were examples of schools that had identified this issue prior to the EPP and had put on a late bus on specific days to help pupils participate, but this meant pupils could only take part in activities that took place on those days.

In addition, the distance to the location of the enrichment activity could also be a barrier. The longer travel-time to attend external activities meant that participation in these activities was often in conflict with the available curriculum time:

“The barrier there was it was during curriculum time, and it was [the] travel time. So literally trying to get the youngsters, because they had the minibuses, trying to get the youngsters out of school to the location and then back simply wouldn’t work within a defined hour and a half period that they had.”

[Coordinating organisation]

The distance between enrichment providers and schools also affected enrichment providers’ motivation for providing additional activities during the EPP. It was noted that implementation worked well when the enrichment provider and school were within easy reach of each other, with central locations for meetings and without prolonged travel times, but it worked less well where this was not the case.

“We had a kind of plan at the beginning, and it became quite quickly apparent to me that that plan didn’t really suit the area geographically, because it’s a huge area [...]. And then it’s hard for even the teachers, even the people that do drive to bring them all together just because if it’s going to take someone an hour to drive over somewhere after work, you know, it’s a big, big issue.”

[Coordinating organisation]

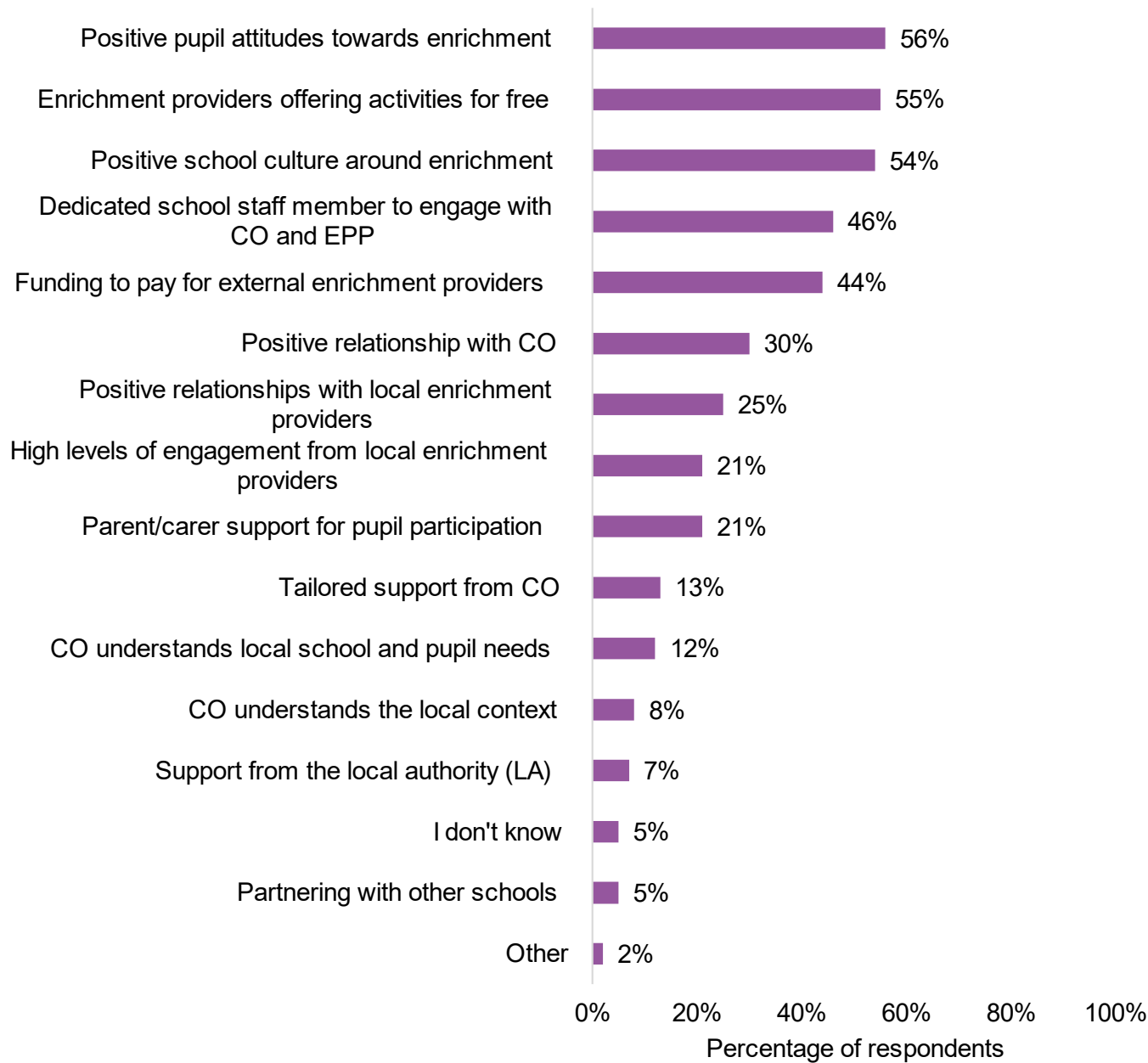
Lastly, there were isolated cases where COs discussed that in rural areas there can be high levels of hidden poverty which are often getting overlooked in terms of funding allocation, and present significant barriers to participation.

7.2 What factors facilitated EPP delivery and/or helped to overcome these barriers

The school survey revealed that positive pupil attitudes towards enrichment (56%), enrichment providers being able to offer activities for free (55%), and a positive school culture around enrichment activities (54%) were the most important factors that helped schools deliver enrichment activities as part of the EPP ([see Figure 16](#)).

Figure 16: Factors that helped schools deliver enrichment activities as part of the EPP

Use zoom on your browser to view

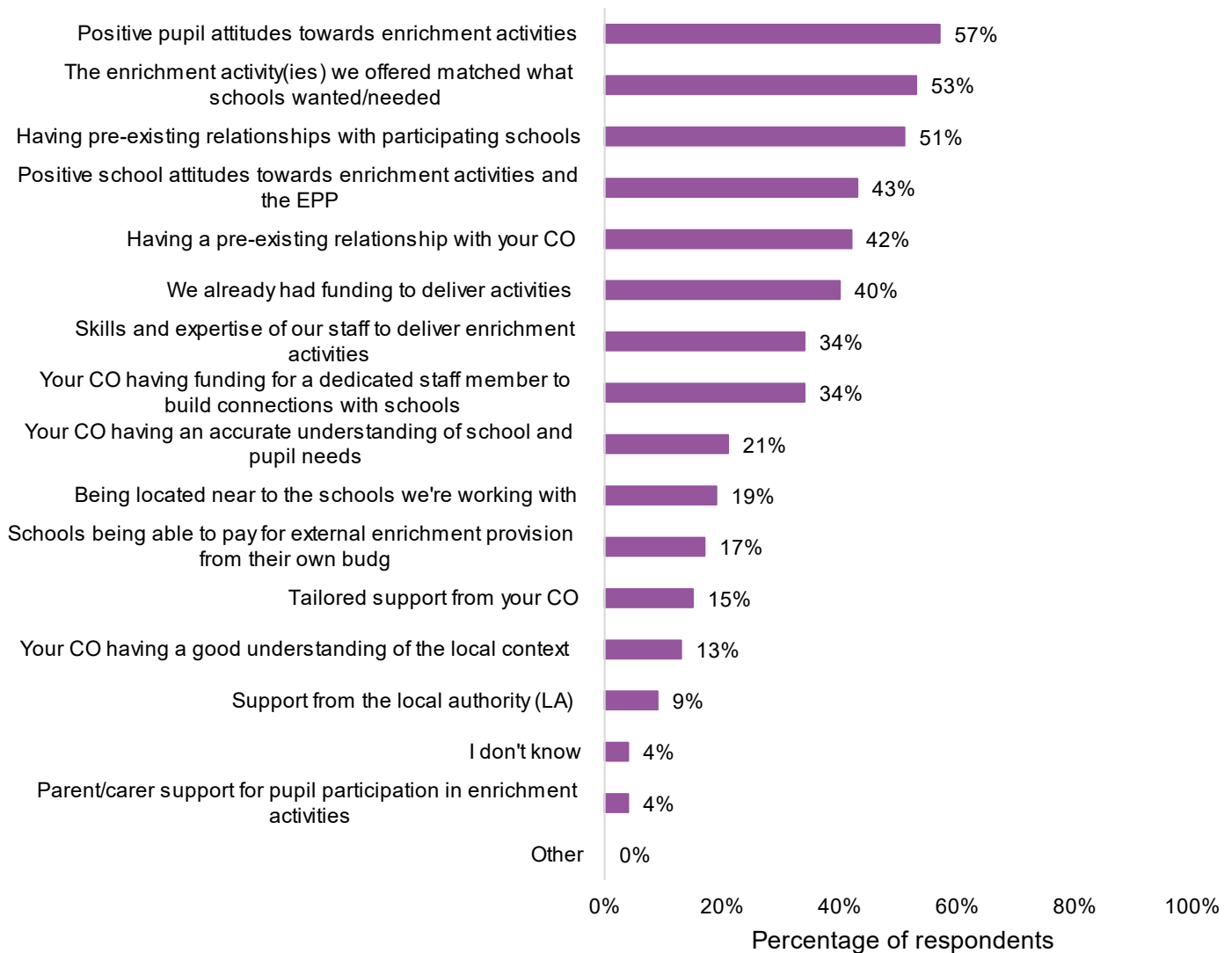


Data source: follow-up school survey (N = 112). Note participants could select up to 3 options from the list shown in the figure.

The enrichment provider survey showed that enrichment providers felt that positive pupil attitudes (57%), the enrichment activities they offered matching school needs (53%), and pre-existing relationships with schools (51%), were the most important factors for helping them to work with schools to deliver enrichment activities during the pilot ([Figure 17](#)).

Figure 17: Factors that helped enrichment providers to work with schools to deliver activities as part of the EPP

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: follow-up enrichment provider survey (N = 78). Note: participants could select up to 3 options, so percentages do not sum to 100.

These key factors together with themes from the qualitative data are described in the following sections.

7.2.1 Having a school culture that is supportive of enrichment

Overall, the survey results showed that school staff (56%) and enrichment providers (57%) felt that positive pupil attitudes towards enrichment activities were the most important factor for successful EPP delivery. The follow-up school survey also showed that 54% of school staff felt that a positive school culture around enrichment was a key facilitator of the EPP activities. Data from the interviews supported this: having a school culture that was supportive of enrichment meant that schools were more likely to take-up activities. Where school staff prioritised enrichment and/or had

a specific interest in it, so wanted to share knowledge and skills, it was felt that the EPP was more likely to be a success. It was particularly helpful if the EPP lead at the school had the full support of the senior leader team, as this helped ensure that enrichment activities were prioritised.

7.2.2 Pre-existing and/or positive relationships between schools, their CO and enrichment providers were important for EPP success

As discussed in [Chapter 4](#), although COs had to describe their pre-existing relationships and experience of working with secondary schools as part of the application process to become a CO, there were still some COs who struggled to build relationships with and recruit schools during the set-up phase. However, the survey and interview data indicated that pre-existing relationships between COs and schools and enrichment providers were seen as important factors for the success of the EPP, as was having positive relationships between these organisations.

The school survey showed that 30% of school staff felt that a positive relationship with the CO supported successful provision, and 25% rated a positive relationship with the local enrichment providers as an important facilitator.

The numbers were considerably higher for enrichment providers: pre-existing relationships with schools (51%) or their CO (42%) were seen as important contributors for working with schools to deliver enrichment activities.

This is also reflected in the qualitative data. COs felt that pre-existing relationships with schools led to increased school engagement. Being already established in a region and having a good reputation with schools also supported networking and opened doors.

“I remember sitting on a lot of meetings where people [other COs] were struggling to engage schools and we never had that problem because straight away we can pick the phone up to people who have got relationships within schools, and we’re a trusted delivery person already, so the geography is really positive actually because we’re so well established already in the area.”

[Coordinating organisation]

The other reason why COs having pre-existing relationships with schools was important was because these organisations tended to have a better understanding of how to work with schools (such as communication) and the factors they needed to

consider (for example safeguarding/risk assessments, time required for schools to respond).

7.2.3 Offering activities on school premises, during the school day or integrated into the curriculum helped support pupil participation

Many schools offered new activities on their premises through the EPP, which was both one of the intentions of the pilot, and helped to negate the challenges of taking pupils off-premises to take part in activities. These new activities were delivered in several different ways. Firstly, new activities were offered during lunchtimes. Secondly, enrichment providers were invited to come to the school during curriculum time to deliver activities or provide taster sessions, which allowed the pupils to meet external providers.

There were also examples of schools making enrichment part of their curriculum (such as building it into subjects). This was felt to provide consistency in the offer of activities and enhance participation. We note that making activities part of the curriculum is unlikely to meet the definition of ‘enrichment’ for this pilot, as pupils may not have had a choice about the activities they participated in. However, one CO noted that by taking this approach the school had been able to integrate additional activities into the PE curriculum, thus enriching what pupils were offered during the school day and meaning that all pupils could benefit:

“Another school has used the project to hard wire different enrichment into their core Curriculum. [...] We’ve had some climbing walls. We’ve got boxersize, we’ve got a whole host of things happening at [school name] within the curriculum because they went to the providers and said this is when we have our Year 9s, 10s, 11s for their PE, can you come in and be part of our core offer within that programme of study?”

[Coordinating organisation]

7.3 What did we learn about barriers to pupil participation in enrichment activities and how to overcome them

In addition to the implementation barriers experienced by schools in relation to delivery of the EPP (as discussed above), this section briefly discusses the barriers

to enrichment participation experienced by pupils, along with some examples of how they can be overcome. Note that some of the examples for overcoming these barriers pre-existed the EPP and cannot be attributed to the pilot but have been included to aid learning for future projects. Two of the 3 themes below relate to pupil attitudes towards the enrichment offer, which both schools and enrichment providers identified as the main factor that aided delivery of enrichment ([see Section 7.2](#)). Addressing this therefore appears to be key to improving uptake of enrichment in schools.

7.3.1 Lack of pupil confidence was a persistent barrier to participation

In the focus groups, pupils discussed how feeling self-conscious or out of their comfort zone could prevent pupils from taking part in new enrichment activities, especially when they had to meet new people or did not have friends to go with.

“I really do think it’s a lot about self-confidence and being able to put yourself forward, that sort of thing. And I think that’s what many maybe lack. So that’s why not a lot of people may do some clubs. ”

[Pupil]

School staff felt that a lack of confidence was a particular barrier to pupils attending enrichment activities offered by external providers, where pupils did not know the member of staff running activities. Some schools reported overcoming this barrier during the pilot by offering drop-in sessions or tasters at lunchtime to give the pupils the chance to meet the activity leaders before coming along to an enrichment session. This opportunity to meet providers informally at school was felt to have encouraged pupils to engage with the enrichment offer and break down preconceptions.

“And one of the things we did try to do was we tried to set up the opportunity for providers if there was a need to come into school and just meet the children, talk to them about their provision, talk to them about what they offered. We tried to do that, and we set that facility up.”

[Coordinating organisation]

COs and school staff also reported that pupils worried about being judged by others for attending certain clubs (peer-pressure).

7.3.2 Lack of transport, clashing activities and family circumstances prevent pupils from taking part in enrichment activities after school

Offering enrichment activities after school often meant that not all pupils could take part. There were several different reasons for this. Firstly, lack of transport was a key issue. This complements the results reported in [Section 7.1.5](#), which discussed how lack of affordable transport options meant it was difficult for schools to take up enrichment offers located off the school premises. However, lack of transport was also a barrier to pupils taking part in enrichment activities on school premises, which took place outside of normal school hours.

Although pupils' perceived access to suitable transport improved slightly between baseline and follow-up, over a third of school staff agreed or strongly agreed that pupils struggle to participate in enrichment activities because of lack of access or transport (35% at follow up compared to 39% at baseline) ([Figure 18](#)). One of the pupils from the focus groups described this issue:

“I’m not allowed to go to many activities because my mum can’t pick me up because she’s a teacher. And I’m not allowed to walk home by myself because I live a long way away.”

[Pupil]

Issues with transport were a particular barrier to pupil participation in rural areas and in areas where safety was a concern. These issues were felt to be especially acute in winter when pupils would potentially need to walk home alone in the dark after enrichment activities.

“So, safety and security is an issue in some areas too. You can’t let your young people out later after school after dark in certain areas. It really depends on where you live, if it’s dark at night there are rough areas, for girls and boys to be travelling.”

[Coordinating organisation]

“Like if you walk home you have to walk home like an hour later... like at Christmas time and you’re coming out of clubs and it’s half past 4 or

something and it's dark and you have to walk home alone."

[Pupil]

Linked to this, a lack of communication about changes to activities (for example, when a club is cancelled or a new club added) made it more difficult for pupils to participate in activities after school because if changes were made, they then had to re-arrange their plans for getting home.

A small number of schools had already identified the scheduling of enrichment activities after school as an issue prior to the EPP and had made efforts to enable pupils to participate. This included integrating the activities into the school day as part of the curriculum or during lunch time. A small number of these schools also provided transport to enable pupils to get home after taking part in enrichment activities after school, which pupils appreciated:

"I like that they've got the late bus running, so they have a late bus service running on Tuesday and Thursday that helps students get home. And the other thing is I live out of catchment, so I get driven to the bus stop. But it goes to my house on the way back. It's so much better if I can get to my house."

[Pupil]

Another key reason pupils struggled to attend enrichment activities after school is that they clashed with other activities they were taking part in outside of school or with other activities their school offered which they also wanted to take part in.

Pupils also reported that family and/or personal reasons could stop them from participating in enrichment activities, especially after school. These included: being too tired after a long day at school, clashing timetables with other after-school activities, looking after siblings, perceived pressure to focus on exam preparation or homework. Some pupils also reported a lack of parental support or parental pressures as a reason they did not take part in activities:

"So, my mum wants me to stop going to drama [club] in Y10 because she feels it's not like educational because it's not like one of my main [GCSE] subjects."

[Pupil]

Another key issue for pupils was lack of time to take part in enrichment activities: at follow-up, the pupil survey revealed that 17% of pupils felt they did not have time to take part in enrichment activities outside of school, while 28% felt they did not have time to take part in enrichment activities at school.

The barriers described above varied for different pupils, and pupils were frequently aware of the main barriers they and their peers at their school experienced in terms of participation. In addition, schools and COs often felt that socio-economically disadvantaged pupils faced the most barriers to participation including lack of funds to pay for activities that were not free of charge, lack of transport, and family/caring responsibilities:

“Naturally, some of the groups that need intervention the most or don’t necessarily engage in intervention or enrichment, are the young people who face the most barriers to attendance, whether that be transport to and from school or family commitments, or they’re a young carer.”

[Coordinating organisation]

7.3.3 Pupils were not always satisfied with the existing offer or did not know about it

A key reason for pupils not participating in enrichment activities is that they did not like the activities on offer. The pupil survey indicated that even at follow-up, only 33% of pupils felt their school offered enrichment activities that interested them (compared with 36% at baseline), whereas 38% did not (compared with 34% at baseline). Although pupil voice was a key part of the needs assessments during the early part of the pilot, it seems that there was still a gap between what pupils wanted from enrichment and what was on offer. This is despite 87% of schools who completed the follow-up survey reporting that they asked pupils what kinds of enrichment activities they would like ([Figure 18](#)). For example, pupils in the focus groups felt that sometimes, there was too much focus on sports, or they wanted activities (such as football) to be offered for both boys and girls. On the other hand, other clubs including some craft activities and Therapy Dogs were oversubscribed and felt to be too busy or noisy.

Some of the pupils who participated in the focus groups reported that they felt there was a lack of advertising of clubs, and they were not fully aware of the activities

currently on offer. This was despite many schools reporting that they advertised enrichment activities to pupils. At follow-up, 87% of school staff who completed the survey agreed or strongly agreed that pupils had all the information needed about the school's enrichment offer ([Figure 18](#)).

In addition, 87% of schools also said that teachers encourage pupils to participate in enrichment activities. Therefore, it appears that more work still needs to be done to ensure that information about extra-curricular and other enrichment opportunities reaches pupils.

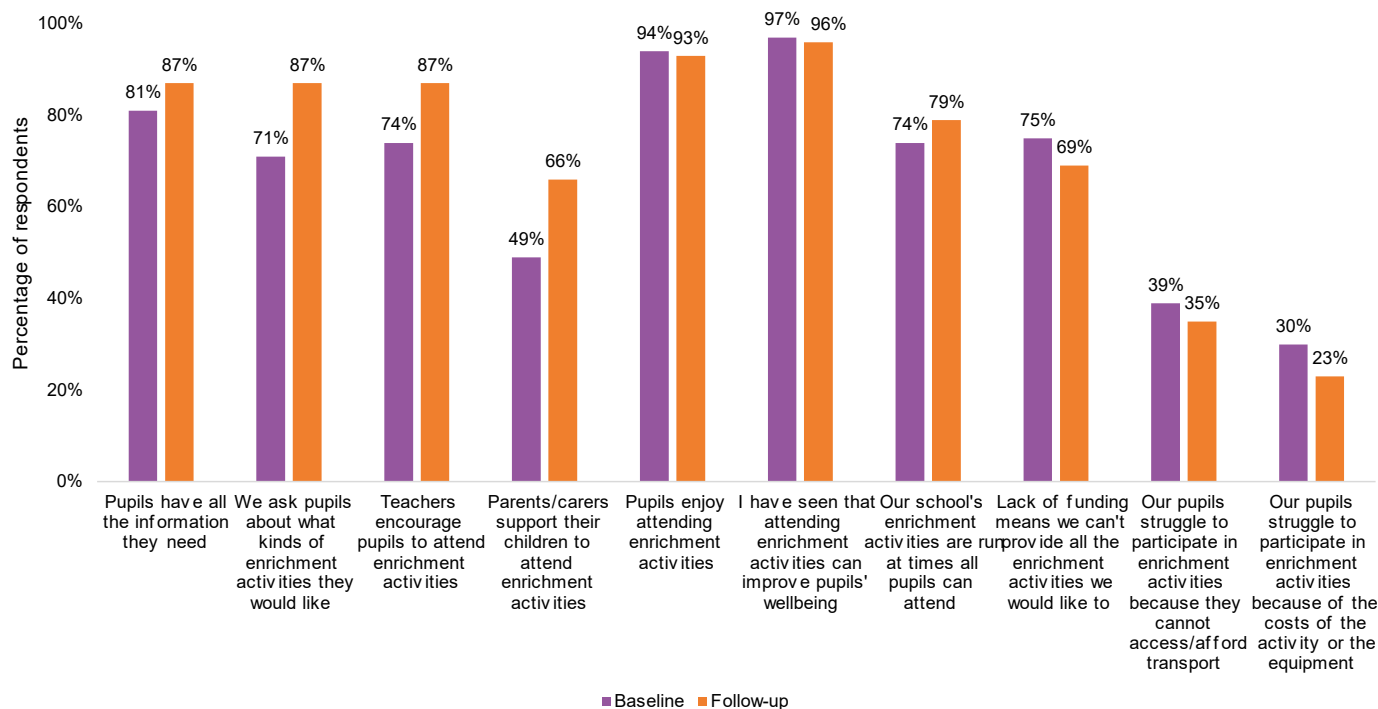
Some schools reported they had tried to address this by increasing the advertising of their activities during the pilot, for example by listing the available offer on screens around the school or reminding pupils of the activities during assembly. There were also a small number of examples where schools offered incentives for participation, although this was not always new for the EPP:

“That’s something that was rolled out in the school. We have enrichment scratch cards. So, like if you’re attending an enrichment, then the teacher that’s running that could give you a scratch card and then you have a chance to win like class points or like a packet of sweets or an Amazon voucher. Yeah. It definitely incentivises people to go.”

[Pupil]

Figure 18: School survey responses about pupil participation in enrichment activities

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 107) and follow-up (N = 112) school surveys.

8. Results: What did participants think of the pilot and its activities

8.1 Coordinating organisations felt that schools and enrichment providers had responded positively to the pilot, although engagement from schools varied over time

Some COs reported that they had strong relationships with schools during the pilot and that schools had been enthusiastic about taking up the pilot activities. These COs often had strong pre-existing relationships with schools and/or had delivered taster activities with the schools or had arranged for these to take place with enrichment providers. The schools liked these activities, and this then resulted in increased buy-in for the rest of the programme. Other COs reported overbooking activities because they knew it was likely some schools would have to drop out on the day (for example, because of staff illness) to ensure that the places available for the activities they offered were fully utilised.

“When schools and local colleges were aware of the programme, colleges were more than happy to support because obviously it’s their feeder schools. And once that relationship with the school had been built and they could see the benefit of the programme, it was really easy to gain that access and deliver those interventions for young people.”

[Coordinating organisation talking about an enrichment offer from local colleges]

However, as discussed in [Section 6.2](#), other COs reported that it was more challenging to keep schools engaged throughout the pilot and that interest in and uptake of activities varied over time. This was especially the case if there were staff changes in the school or the CO during the pilot, as this meant relationships had to be rebuilt.

Another group of COs struggled to talk about how schools had responded to the offer as they were unsure about how much of the offer had been taken up. Examples of where this was the case included where COs had arranged initial introductions between schools and enrichment providers or had provided schools with information about enrichment providers on a website, but it was then left to the school to take-up the offer with the enrichment provider.

However, while COs felt that responses to the pilot from schools had been somewhat mixed and varied over time, COs generally reported that enrichment providers had been enthusiastic about being involved in the pilot, often because they wanted to build relationships with and/or increase their delivery in schools. Although we note that this did not always translate into delivery ([see Section 7.1.5](#)).

“[...]every single provider we contacted said ‘yes, we’d love to be involved in the project, put us down.’”

[Coordinating organisation]

8.2 Schools that were able to engage external enrichment providers as part of the pilot reported positive experiences, but not all schools were able to

work with external providers

Among the case study schools, views about and experiences of the pilot were split. One group of schools who had been able to engage with external enrichment providers during the pilot talked positively about the benefits that external providers could offer their school. These benefits included reducing the burden on school staff who already experienced a high workload and external providers being able to offer activities and experiences that school staff could not.

“I think there are no two ways about it. If we engage with external [providers], particularly in that enrichment week, the children are going to get a better deal that goes without saying, because there are things that we cannot offer.”

[School staff]

In case study schools that had worked with new external enrichment providers as part of the EPP, staff talked positively about the activities and felt that pupils had enjoyed taking part in them. They also noted that some of the new activities offered through the EPP had resulted in a more diverse group of participating pupils, who would not previously have taken part in enrichment activities. This was generally attributed to the activities matching pupil interests and/or the atmosphere in the group that the activity leader was able to create.

“The cooking club has been a good thing – [organisation name] has come in to deliver cooking sessions and they have delivered 6 sessions – it was very popular. The kids from diverse [ethnic] backgrounds have absolutely loved this as they cook at home.”

[School staff]

By contrast, there was another group of schools in the case studies who did not engage with external enrichment providers during the pilot and who struggled to participate in the pilot activities. There were several reasons for this ([see Chapter 7](#) for more details). Firstly, lack of funding was a barrier that prevented schools from working with external providers because they could not afford to pay them or to pay for transport to get to them. Staff in these schools expressed a preference for

enrichment delivery to take place on their school premises to make it more possible for them to participate.

“If I’m going to run a trip and hire a bus you know to hire a minibus to take them from [X to Y location]...that would cost me £150. So, to do that for eight children, that is a lot of money for one session. And if it was 6 to 7 sessions, which it was, I’ve then spent £1000 on children learning about hair and beauty, and only eight children experience that...what I would wish for the EPP to consider is it’s a lot cheaper for them to bring things into school than for school to take students to things.”

[School staff]

Secondly, there were isolated examples of schools that did not like the enrichment options available through their COs offer, so chose not to take them up.

“Also, at the start – there were very few options [enrichment offered through EPP]. And then they started to grow. But actually, when you looked on the website, well, the options weren’t that great.”

[School staff]

8.3 Schools were generally positive about the support they received from their CO, but views about how successful their CO had been in delivering different aspects of the pilot were more mixed, particularly in relation to securing additional funding

Around three-quarters of schools (73%) who completed the school follow-up survey reported that they were satisfied with the information their CO had provided to them about the pilot, and 71% were satisfied with the support they had received from their CO. Between half and two-thirds of schools felt that their CO had been moderately or very successful at delivering different aspects of the pilot ([Table 3](#)). For example, connecting their school with local enrichment providers (64%) and building an

enrichment offer that meets the needs of their school (64%).

While most schools reported that their CO had been at least somewhat successful in delivering different aspects of the pilot, between 10% and 20% of schools reported that their CO was 'not at all successful'. These schools were spread across COs, suggesting that schools' experiences of working with their CO differed quite substantially across the pilot ([see Table 3](#)).

The lowest level of success was for helping schools identify additional funding sources to support enrichment delivery, where only half of schools (50%) felt their CO had been very or moderately successful. This was a part of the pilot that aimed to provide on-going funding to help with the costs of additional enrichment delivery and to support the long-term sustainability of the enrichment offers and partnerships initiated via the EPP. COs were expected to research and help schools and/or enrichment providers to secure additional funding for the continuation of the enrichment offer beyond the EPP.

Interview data further indicated that COs had mixed success in terms of identifying further funding. A minority of COs reported that they or the schools they worked with had been successful at securing funding during the pilot. In one case, a CO had received additional funding through the Opening Schools Facilities fund. There were also examples where schools had applied for funding and were awaiting the outcome.

Other COs had signposted schools to relevant funding opportunities or bid-searching websites but at the time of the follow-up interviews, they were not aware of whether this has led to schools receiving any additional funding. A small group of COs had delivered bid writing training to help school staff to apply for funding to support enrichment delivery. However, not all schools who attended this had been able to put this into practice by the time of the follow-up interviews.

“They have met up together with other schools and they did some writing training to help develop bid writing skills – so she has written a bid for photography equipment to the BIG lottery.”

[School staff]

There were also limitations to raising additional funds, such as staff capacity to write bids or lack of communication between schools and COs to take this forward successfully. In addition, there were some COs that had not attempted to source

additional funding to support on-going enrichment delivery with the schools they were working with.

Table 3: Schools’ views about how successful their CO was in delivering different aspects of the pilot

	Not at all successful	Somewhat successful	Moderately successful	Very successful	Unsure/mis
Connecting your school with local enrichment providers?	10%	19%	32%	32%	7%
Connecting your school with other local secondary schools?	16%	19%	31%	25%	9%
Supporting your school to identify additional funding sources to support enrichment delivery?	19%	21%	31%	19%	11%
Building an enrichment offer that meets the needs and interests of your pupils?	9%	20%	33%	31%	7%

Building an enrichment offer that meets the needs and interests of your school?	7%	20%	38%	27%	8%
Building a cost-effective enrichment offer for your school?	12%	16%	36%	26%	11%

Data source: follow-up school survey (N = 112)

8.4 Enrichment providers who had worked with schools were positive about their experiences, but views about the success of the CO were mixed, and around one-third of enrichment providers reported that none of their delivery related to the EPP

The enrichment provider survey indicated that they had mixed views about their CO. Just under two-thirds (62%) of enrichment providers were ‘quite’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the information they received about the EPP, while 58% were happy with the support they received from their CO ([see Table 4](#)).

Table 4:Enrichment provider responses to the questions ‘Please rate your level of satisfaction with...’

Not at all satisfied	Not very satisfied	Neutral	Quite satisfied	Very satisfied	Unsure/ Missing
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...the information your CO has provided about the EPP	1%	1%	18%	13%	49%	18%
...the support you have received from your CO	3%	0%	24%	14%	44%	16%

Data source: enrichment provider follow-up survey (N = 78)

However, while most enrichment providers felt their CO had been at least ‘somewhat successful’ in delivering different aspects of the pilot, there was also a lot of uncertainty about how successful the COs had been in building enrichment offers that met the needs and interests of schools and pupils. Almost one-third of enrichment providers who responded to the survey were unable to answer most of these questions (see [Table 5](#)). This may have been because nearly one-third (32%) of enrichment providers who completed the survey reported that none of their delivery related to the EPP (see also [Chapter 6](#)). Another 42% of enrichment providers reported that the EPP accounted for 1-25% of their total enrichment delivery.

Table 5: Enrichment providers’ views about how successful their CO was in delivering different aspects of the pilot

	Not at all successful	Not very successful	Somewhat successful	Very successful	Unsure/mis
Connecting your organisation with local secondary schools?	10%	9%	23%	35%	23%
Supporting your organisation to identify	23%	14%	10%	21%	32%

additional funding sources to support enrichment delivery in local schools?					
Building an enrichment offer that meets the needs and interests of pupils?	5%	4%	19%	42%	30%
Building an enrichment offer that meets the needs and interests of schools?	5%	4%	18%	44%	30%

Data source: enrichment provider follow-up survey (N = 78)

Data from the case studies, where enrichment providers were interviewed ([see Chapter 3](#)), is consistent with the enrichment provider survey data. These enrichment providers reported positive experiences of working with case study schools. They talked about how passionate the EPP leads at the schools were and how the high levels of engagement from these staff members and good communication between themselves and the school had facilitated their delivery. However, they also talked about the challenges they experienced around costs and funding, for example, to provide equipment and fitting activities into the school day ([see also Chapter 7](#)).

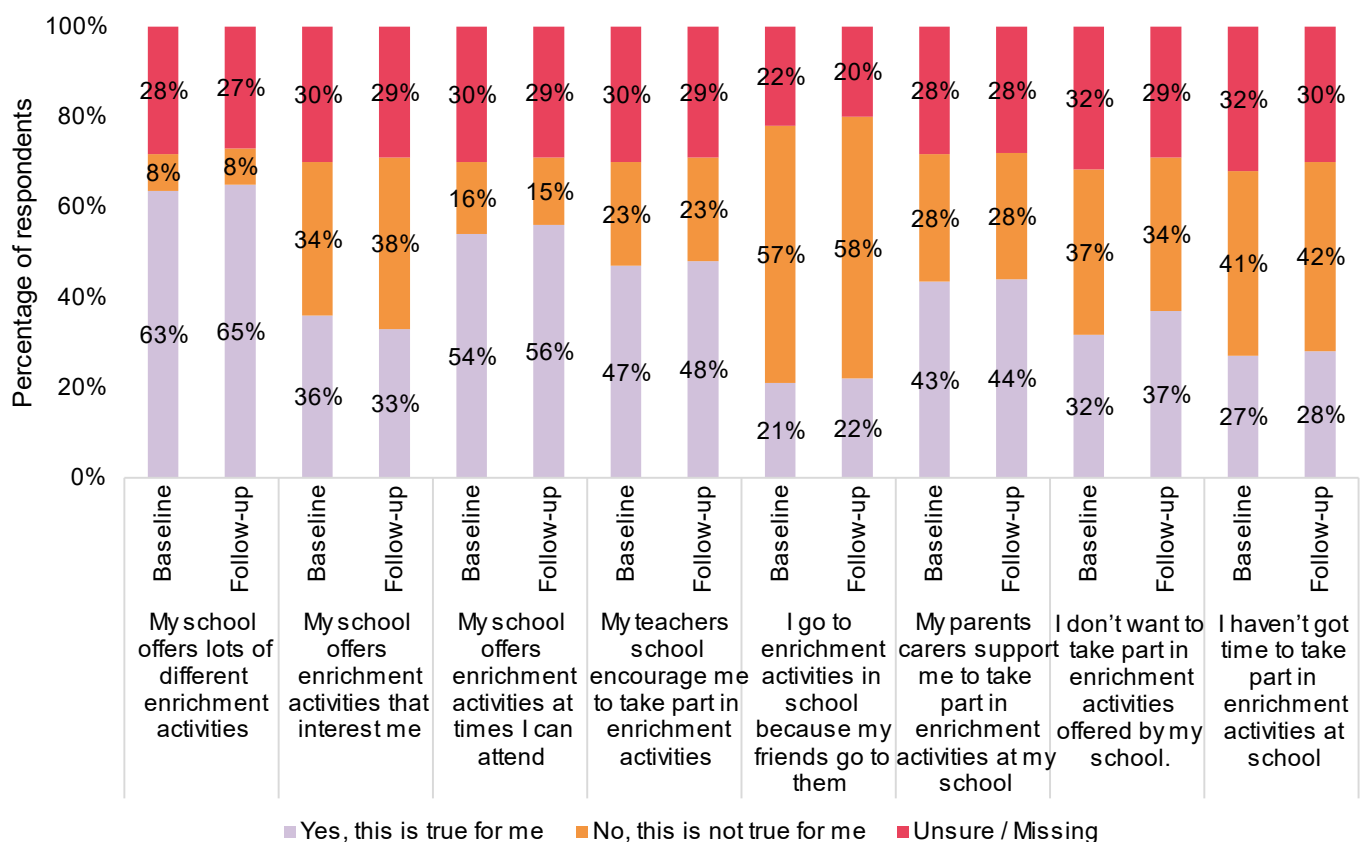
8.5 Pupils’ views about the variety and accessibility of enrichment activities offered by their school and in

their local area were unchanged

Results from the pupil survey indicated that pupils' views about the variety of enrichment activities offered by their school ([Figure 19](#) and in their local area ([Figure 20](#)) were broadly unchanged at the end of the pilot. Similarly, pupil views about the accessibility of activities in terms of timing and potential barriers (such as time to take part, parental support) were also unchanged. However, as reported in [Section 7.3.3](#), while over 60% of pupils recognised that their school offered lots of different activities, only one-third of pupils (33%) who completed the survey at follow-up reported that their school offers enrichment activities that interest them (compared with 36% at baseline). This suggests that despite the pupil voice activities undertaken during the pilot, there is still a disparity between the activities on offer and pupils' interests. It is unclear why this is the case, but data from the CO interviews and case studies indicates that there may be groups of pupils who do not want to take part in any enrichment activities at school because they would prefer to spend time with their friends or go home.

Figure 19: Pupil views about the enrichment activities offered by their school

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys.

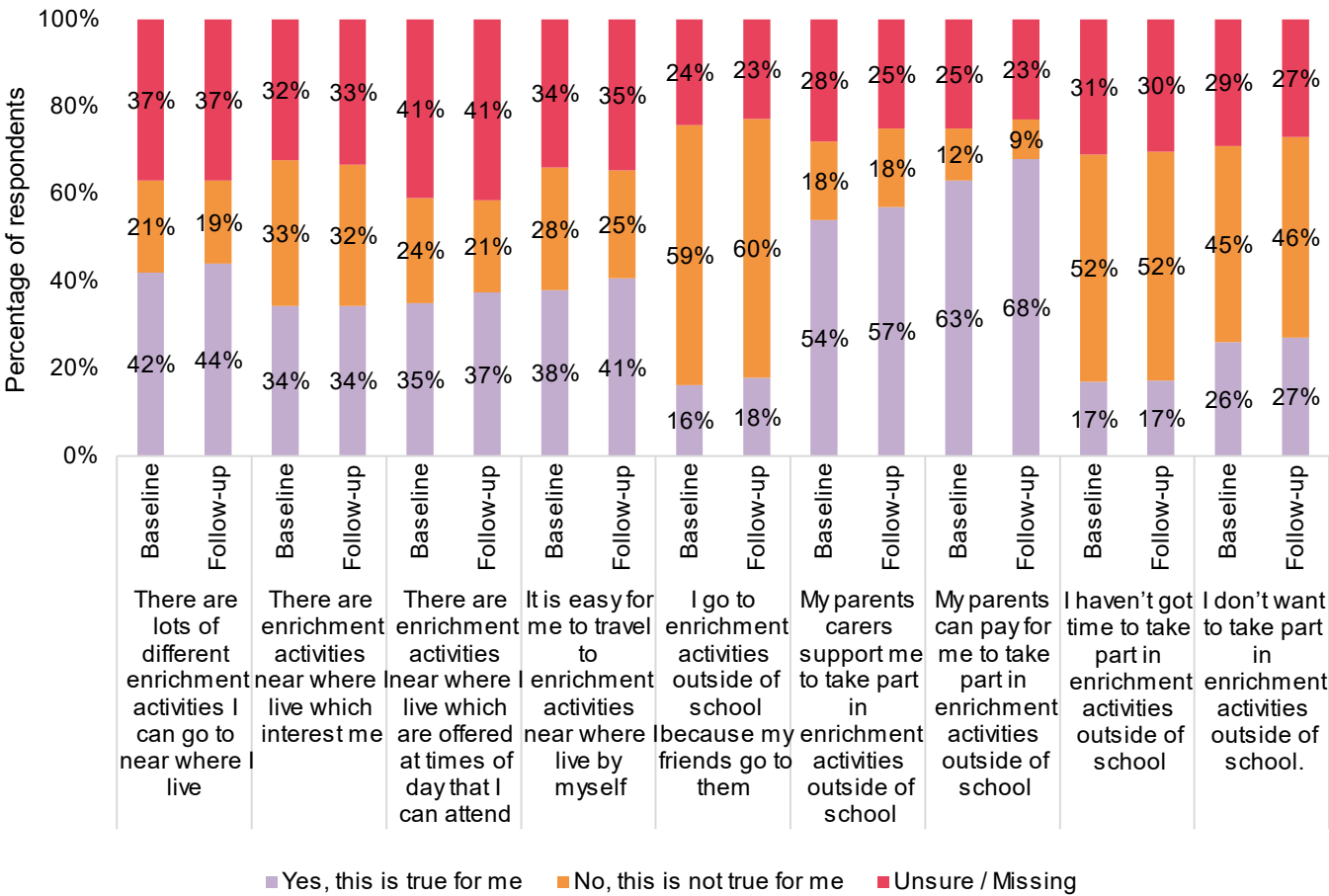
Similar results are seen for activities outside of school ([Figure 20](#)). At follow-up, over

40% of pupils felt that there were a lot of activities available in their local area, but only 34% felt that those activities interested them. However, there was greater uncertainty about what activities were available in their local area than in school. Pupils were also more likely to report that their school offered lots of different activities compared with their local area. This may reflect geographic disparities in local enrichment opportunities between different areas.

In general, around one-third of pupils expressed uncertainty about the enrichment activities taking place inside and outside of school. This may suggest that pupils still lack information about what enrichment activities are on offer both in their school and in their local area.

Figure 20: Pupil views about enrichment activities offered in their local area (outside school)

Use zoom on your browser to view.



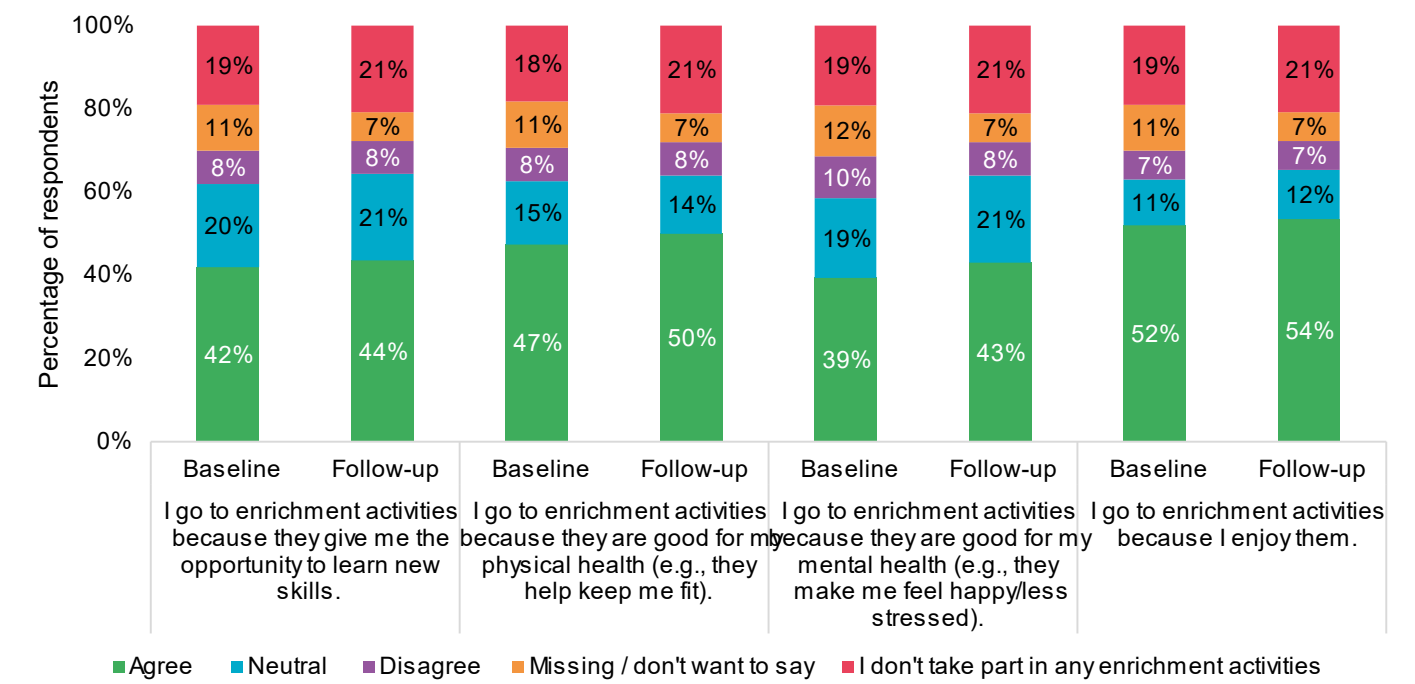
Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys.

We also found that pupils’ reasons for going to enrichment activities remained unchanged before and after the pilot. Just over half of pupils at baseline (52%) and follow-up (54%) reported that they go to enrichment activities because they enjoy them ([Figure 21](#)). Pupils were less likely to say they went to enrichment activities

because they were good for their mental health, with only around 40% of pupils stating they went to enrichment activities for this reason.

Figure 21: Reasons pupils take part in enrichment activities

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (4,177) pupil surveys.

8.6 Pupils were positive about the enrichment activities they took part in at their school, but these activities were not necessarily part of the EPP

Pupils who participated in the focus groups discussed a variety of things they liked about the enrichment activities they took part in^[footnote 16]. Across the groups, there were 7 key themes that emerged in relation to the activities they took part in which are discussed in turn below. However, it is important to note (see Chapter 3) that the pupils who took part in the focus groups were unaware of the EPP or specific EPP activities. In addition, many of the pupils who took part in the focus groups talked about their experiences of enrichment activities offered by their school that pre-existed the EPP and were not related to the pilot. That said, the themes that emerged across EPP and non-EPP activities were consistent. Some of these themes are discussed further in Chapter 9.

8.6.1 Pupils liked the range of activities on offer and valued the opportunity

to meet others with similar interests

All of the case study schools had extensive enrichment programmes offering a variety of activities that pupils could take part in prior to the EPP. In some of these schools, the EPP had led to additional enrichment activities being offered. Pupils generally reported being happy with the variety of activities on offer because there were activities that matched their interests.

Across the CO interviews and case studies, a wide variety of examples were given as to how taking part in enrichment activities had enabled pupils to develop new or existing skills. This applied to activities that were open to everyone, as well as activities where pupils had been specifically selected by their school to take part. For example, some high attaining pupils had the opportunity to learn Mandarin and school staff felt these lessons provided a challenge for these pupils and enabled them to learn a new skill.

“I get to learn about the Chinese culture as well as the language.”

[Pupil]

Pupils in the focus groups felt enrichment activities had enabled them to learn or develop a wide range of skills including computer coding, badminton, animation, cooking, crochet and threading a sewing machine to name a few. While some pupils talked about learning these skills for enjoyment, others talked about how the new skills they had acquired through taking part in these activities could help them in their future careers.

“I [want to] be a fashion designer and craft club has helped me know how to do sewing.”

[Pupil]

In many cases these skills were also linked to additional knowledge. For example, learning to cook was felt to have given pupils a better understanding of food and nutrition. Meanwhile, medical training, which was offered in one area due to the characteristics of the location, was felt to have given pupils knowledge of what to do in a medical emergency.

“I think they’re a little bit more aware now if one of their friends was unfortunately stabbed, what they would do to try and stop them from bleeding to death.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Some pupils had specific suggestions for additional activities they would like to take part in, or wanted enrichment activities to last longer so, for example, they had more time to finish what they were working on or to complete a game/match.

Pupils talked about enjoying taking part in enrichment activities with their friends as it gave them additional opportunities to socialise with them. In addition, pupils reported they valued the opportunity enrichment activities gave them to meet pupils from other year groups with similar interests, whom they might not otherwise have met. They also liked that everyone who had chosen to attend the activity wanted to be there:

“I like the opportunity you have to meet people that you wouldn’t have originally. Because if I hadn’t gone to any of the enrichment things, I would only know the people in my lessons and a few people in my year, but because I’ve been able to go to enrichment, there’s lots of people from other years that I wouldn’t have met otherwise and like, I’ve developed really strong friendships with them. So it’s been a really nice opportunity that I have had to meet them.”

[Pupil]

8.6.2 Pupils who took part in enrichment activities appreciated the welcoming, supportive and inclusive environments created by staff leading the enrichment activities, but some felt that specific activities were too crowded

Pupils discussed the importance of the enrichment activity environment and how creating the right environment, for example, one that is welcoming and inclusive (such as, in dodgeball and drama clubs), or more professional, made them want to attend activities:

“In boxing I like how the boxing coach is making people work hard. I like how they organise the warm-up sessions – it feels more professional than if teachers were doing it.”

[Pupil]

In some cases, pupils felt that the environment the group leader of the enrichment activity had created had led to more pupils wanting to take part in the activity over time.

“It doesn’t feel like we’re in school, just feels like we’re hanging out in a group with friends...[and]...there’s like a sense of community, because [teacher name] she’s just amazing, she makes it feel like a family.”

[Pupil]

Pupils talked about how these environments helped them to feel safe and enabled them to learn from and get inspiration from others, as well as to share their own work. Pupils also gave examples of actions staff members had taken to make activities more inclusive for example, for neurodiverse pupils, which they appreciated:

“I enjoy that it is a safe space to do my crochet, and I can show others what I have been doing. Also, I can get inspiration from others.”

[Pupil]

However, while pupils wanted enrichment activities to be inclusive, they noted that some activities were so popular they could become too crowded or there were not enough resources to enable everyone to participate. In some cases, schools restricted participation to avoid sessions getting over-crowded, but pupils expressed frustration that sometimes pupils selected for these activities did not then turn up, which meant that someone else who had missed out could have taken part:

“I don’t like the fact that we have limited resources...I think the best

example of that is DT club so, we can make bracelets, crochet and stuff. The thing is, all the year groups will need that material as well, so we can't make everything we need or want to make because we have to share with other year groups and stuff."

[Pupil]

"For therapy dogs like, people can't fit anymore, and many people [are] in [the group], but I never see everyone turn up and always like only a couple of people."

[Pupil]

8.6.3 Pupils liked that they had more freedom to be creative within the enrichment sessions compared with the classroom and could work together to develop their skills

Pupils consistently talked about how they liked developing or learning new skills from taking part in enrichment activities. Some pupils chose to take part in enrichment activities because it allowed them to further develop an interest they already had. Others had chosen to take part specifically to learn a new skill or have a new experience. In both cases, these opportunities were really valued by pupils. They particularly appreciated the freedom to explore things they were interested in and to be creative, for example, by having the flexibility to make what they wanted.

"I like being able to build, whatever you want as long as it fits the criteria and being creative."

[Pupil talking about a Lego club]

Pupils also talked about how they liked learning from each other. By mixing with pupils from different year groups including those with more experience doing the activity they were able to develop their own skills in a more flexible way than in the classroom environment.

"[...] I was like really struggling to sew up my jumpsuit and I got help from

some other members[...] It just feels like a different feeling because like you, it's separate from lessons. That's quite nice. And then [in lessons] of course, you can't really help people. You're kind of just told to sit down and stay down."

[Pupil]

9. Results: What difference is the EPP perceived to have made for enrichment providers, schools, and pupils

9.1 Schools were more likely to report that the EPP had resulted in changes to their approach to enrichment delivery than enrichment providers

Results from the school survey indicated that over half of schools felt that the pilot had benefited various aspects of their enrichment delivery including their ability to align activities to pupils' interests (70%), to facilitate a variety of different activities (74%), and make activities more accessible to pupils (55%) ([Table 6](#)). However, for each survey question, there was also a substantial portion of schools (between 20% and 40%) that indicated the pilot had resulted in no change for them in that area. The least successful aspects of the pilot appeared to be obtaining additional funding to support enrichment activities (40% reported no change) and schools working together to deliver enrichment activities (39% reported no change).

Table 6: 'Indicate below the extent to which you feel your school's participation in the EPP has led to a change in each of the following areas'

	Substantial decline	Small decline	No change	Small increase	Substantial increase	Unsu
Your school's ability to make enrichment	0%	1%	37%	31%	24%	7%

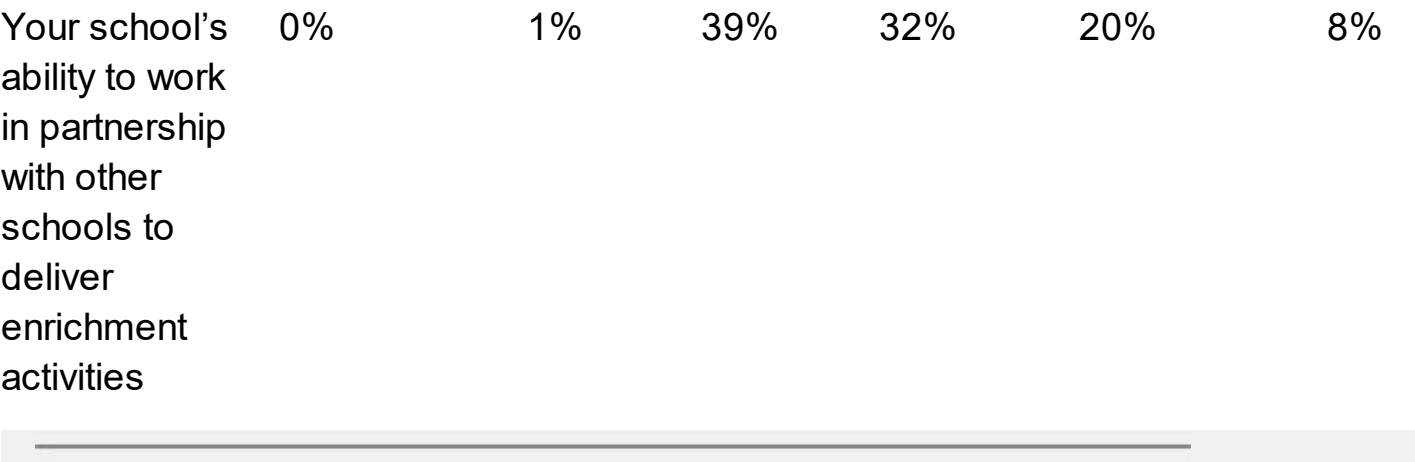
activities
more
accessible for
your pupils in
terms of
timing,
location, etc.

Your school's understanding of pupils' enrichment interests and needs	0%	0%	23%	36%	33%	8%
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The alignment of your school's enrichment offer with your pupils' interests	0%	1%	20%	40%	30%	8%
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Your school's ability to identify additional funding sources to support enrichment delivery	1%	0%	40%	34%	17%	8%
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Your school's ability to effectively facilitate a variety of different enrichment activities	0%	1%	18%	47%	27%	7%
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Data source: school follow-up survey (N = 112)

Meanwhile, results of the enrichment provider survey ([Table 7](#)) indicated that the pilot had less impact on the activities they delivered compared with schools. Less than half (40%) of respondents reported that the pilot had led to an increase in the total number of hours of enrichment their organisation offered, while only 16% reported an increase in their overall capacity (staff and funding) to deliver enrichment activities. In both cases, ‘no change’ was the most prevalent response (44% and 60% respectively).

Table 7: Enrichment provider responses to ‘What (if any) change do you believe participating in the EPP has led to in terms of...’

	Substantial decline	Small decline	No change	Small increase	Substantial increase	Unsure
The overall capacity (staff and funding) of your organisation to deliver enrichment activities?	0%	1%	60%	10%	6%	2
The total number of hours of enrichment activities	0%	1%	44%	32%	12%	1

your
organisation
delivers per
week?

Data source: enrichment provider follow-up survey (N = 78)

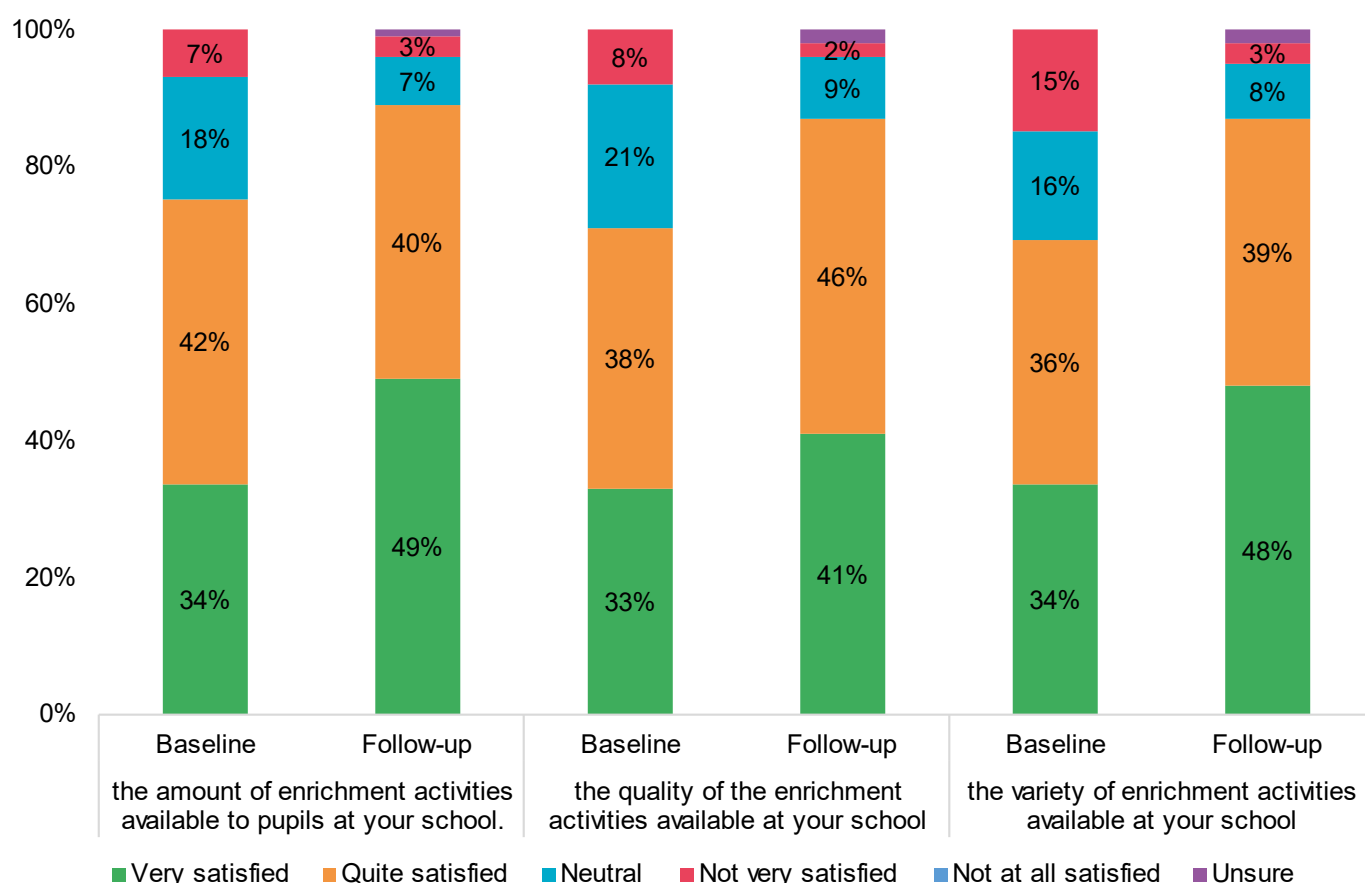
9.2 Schools reported higher levels of satisfaction with their enrichment offer at the end of the pilot, and there was evidence of improved relationships with enrichment providers for some schools

Results from the school survey indicated that schools were more satisfied with the number, variety and quality of the enrichment activities they offered at the end of the pilot compared with before the pilot. Just over three-quarters of schools (76%) reported they were very or quite satisfied with the amount of enrichment activities they offered before the pilot compared with 89% at the end of the pilot. Schools also reported increased levels of satisfaction with the quality (71% increased to 87%) and variety of enrichment activities (72% increased to 87%) at the end of the pilot ([see Figure 22](#)).

Figure 22: School satisfaction ratings with their enrichment offer at baseline and follow-up

Use zoom on your browser to view.

Please rate your level of satisfaction with....



Data source: school baseline (N = 107) and follow-up surveys (N = 112).

More than 60% of schools reported positive changes in their relationships with and knowledge of enrichment providers. However, a substantial minority of schools (between 13% and 32%) reported that there had been no change in the individual survey items ([Table 8](#)). This included nearly one-third (32%) of schools who reported that there had been no change in the number of external enrichment providers they worked with because of the pilot. This suggests that different schools had different experiences of the pilot in terms of changes in their relationships with external enrichment providers.

Table 8: Responses to a follow-up school survey about how schools benefited from the pilot

	Substantial decline	Small decline	No change	Small increase	Substantial increase	Unsure
The quality of relationships between your school	0%	0%	29%	46%	19%	

and local
enrichment
providers

Your school's knowledge of the enrichment activities available locally	0%	1%	13%	53%	27%
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The number of local enrichment providers your school uses/works with	0%	0%	32%	50%	12%
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Data source: school follow-up survey (N = 112)

In addition, more than half of schools (54%) reported that there had been no change in the financial costs of delivering enrichment, while 30% reported that the costs had increased because of the EPP ([Table 9](#)). Only a very small number of schools reported that the EPP had led to a reduction in their enrichment costs.

Table 9: Schools’ responses to the question about how the EPP had changed the financial cost of delivering enrichment activities

	Large decrease	Small decrease	No change	Small increase	Substantial increase	Unsure /Missing
The financial cost to your school in providing enrichment	1%	3%	54%	22%	8%	12%

Data source: school follow-up survey (N = 112)

The qualitative data also indicated differences in the outcomes schools experienced from taking part in the pilot. For one group of schools, positive outcomes were identified. Among these schools, benefits included building relationships with other schools and enrichment providers, having new ideas about enrichment and insights into what pupils and parents/carers want to help inform decisions about future enrichment activities, and being able to better use school staff skills to deliver enrichment.

“I’ve already got better ideas about how can we improve our extra-curricular offer for next year in terms of how I manage my own time just in terms of how we do fixtures and on certain days, do fixtures on other days, do clubs and those types of things... So we’re in a better place now to strategically think about what it might look like to open up the door to those opportunities a bit better.”

[School staff]

“We have good relationships with new providers as a result. [Enrichment provider name] and [Enrichment provider name] have done workshops with all Year 7.”

[School staff]

For the other group of schools, the reported benefits were limited, if any were identified at all. This was typically for 1 of 2 reasons. Either the delivery model being used by the CO was not fully up and running. Alternatively, the school could not take up offers from external enrichment providers. Where schools could not take up the offer, this was because they could not afford to pay external providers or because the school was located away from the main geographical focus/venue of the offer and they struggled to get to and/or afford transport to be able to take part in the activities being offered.

“I think the only kind of interaction that we’ve had with the pilot is the funding for the resources [given to them by the CO]. So that’s the only place where we can see it a benefit.”

[School staff]

It is also important to note that many of the COs we interviewed struggled to talk about the difference the pilot had made to schools and pupils, as they were unaware of how much of the offer they had put together had been taken up. There were also reflections from COs that the pilot timeline was too short for potential benefits of the programme to be fully realised. It was felt that a longer timeline of around 2 years would have provided a better opportunity to explore the impact of the programme.

“[...] I don’t think there’s enough [funding] to for what they were trying to do. And the year just wasn’t long enough to make any impact in the schools because you spend that long trying to reach out to schools, then when you’re in and you finally get that relationship, then the programme ended.”

[Coordinating organisation]

9.3 Enrichment activities were perceived to offer a wide variety of benefits for pupils, but not all these benefits can be attributed to the EPP as many of the enrichment activities on offer pre-existed the pilot

Stakeholders from across the pilot talked about the benefits enrichment activities offered to pupils and the key themes from these discussions are described below. This data demonstrates the wide range of benefits that enrichment activities can offer to pupils. However, it is important to view these findings in the context that schools were generally offering only a few new activities because of the EPP ([see Chapter 6](#)), and that not all the benefits talked about in the interviews and focus groups were attributable to the EPP because at least some of the enrichment activities discussed pre-existed the EPP. In addition, there was a group of COs who were unable to talk about the outcomes of the EPP for pupils because they had not received any feedback or were unsure how much of the offer they had put together

had been taken up. Therefore, while the themes discussed below relate to outcomes from enrichment activities that were part of the EPP, the same themes were also present in the wider dataset.

9.3.1 Enrichment activities gave pupils the opportunity to build relationships and make new friends, but this did not appear to change pupils’ sense of school belonging

All stakeholders gave examples of enrichment activities leading to pupils building relationships and making new friends. Pupils talked about how taking part in enrichment activities had given them the chance to meet other pupils with similar interests including those in different year groups, which had led them to make new friends. Meanwhile, school staff talked about how building these friendships could also have wider benefits such as helping to build pupils’ sense of identity.

“It helped me have a stronger bond with different people and not being so shy around people I don’t know.”

[Pupil]

Some school staff and CO interviewees felt that enrichment activities could help build relationships between pupils and the staff member running the enrichment activity. For these staff members, it was felt that building these trusted relationships could help pupils engage with other aspects of school.

However, despite suggestions that taking part in EPP enrichment activities had enabled pupils to build new friendships, the pupil survey indicated that there was no change in pupils’ sense of school belonging following the pilot. At both baseline and follow-up, the median school belonging score was 24 out of 35 ([see Figure 23](#) for full results by individual items). This score broadly equates to a mixture of mainly ‘neutral’ with some ‘agree’ responses, suggesting that pupils are ambivalent or have some sense of belonging at their school.

Table 10: School belonging scores from the pupil survey

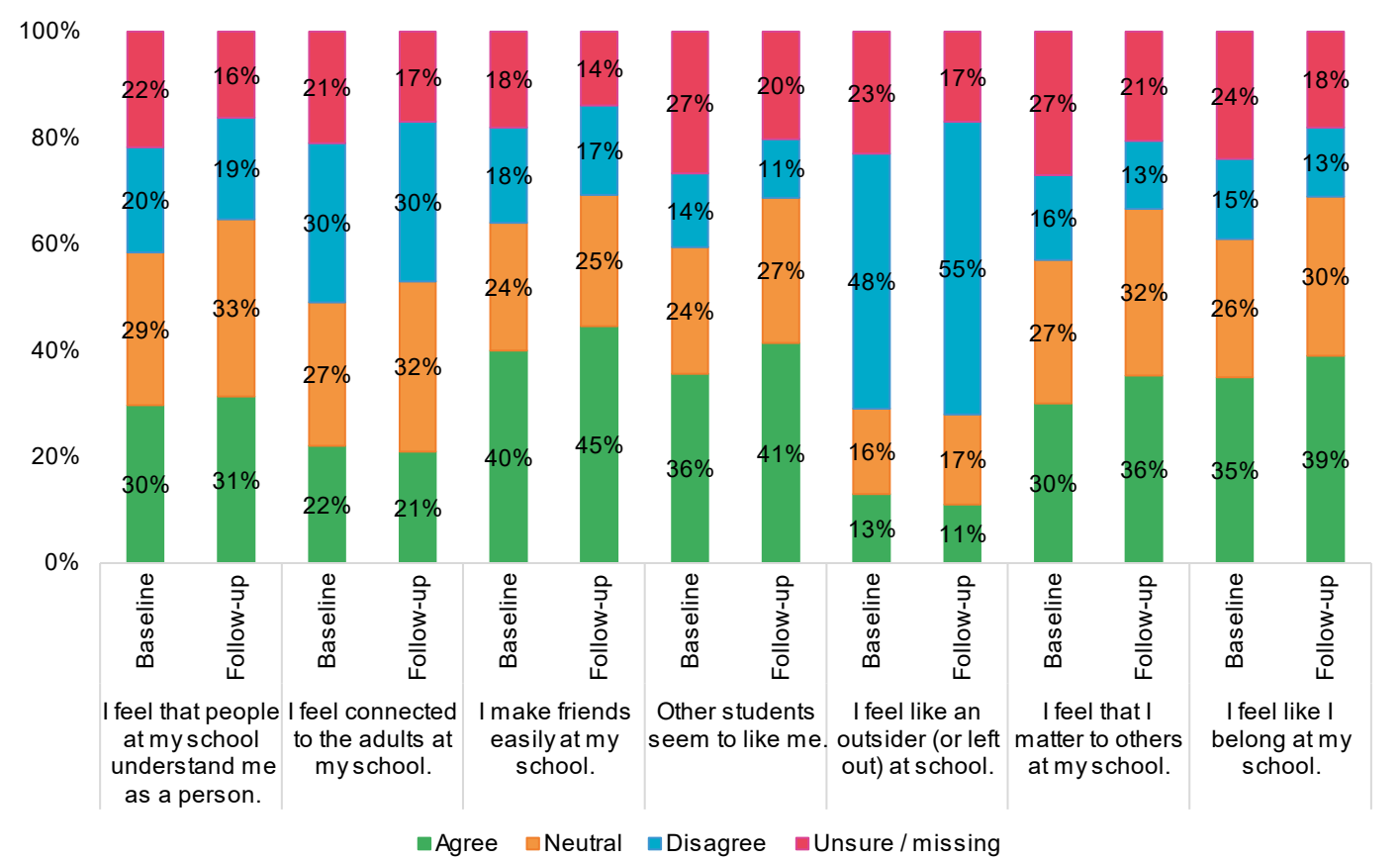
	Baseline	Follow-up
Min/Max	7.0 / 35.0	7.0 / 35.0
Median	24.0	24.0

Mean (S.D.)	22.9 (5.6)	23.4 (5.2)
Interquartile range	7	6

Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys. The school belonging scale consisted of 7 items scored upon a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Figure 23: Responses to the school belonging questions on the pupil survey.

Use zoom to view on your browser.



Data source: baseline (N = 3,923) and follow-up (N = 4,177) pupil surveys

9.3.2 Pupils had the chance to develop their skills and knowledge, and have new experiences, which they felt had helped improve their confidence

As outlined in [section 8.6.1](#), pupils reported enjoying new experiences, while school staff felt it was helping pupils to consider their future pathways and experience something different, beyond their immediate local area.

“I like the fact that we’re going out and doing different things that we probably haven’t done before [rather than]...being in school and probably

doing some stuff we've done before.”

[Pupil]

Pupils, school staff and COs from across the pilot talked about how developing these new skills and having new experiences had improved pupils' confidence. A subset of these participants also talked about how these new experiences were also helping to raise aspirations for pupils.

“It's providing opportunities that our students wouldn't naturally be exposed to, and you can see it in them – they are happy to show you what they have made or what they are achieving. It's giving them life changing skills and future opportunities for jobs.”

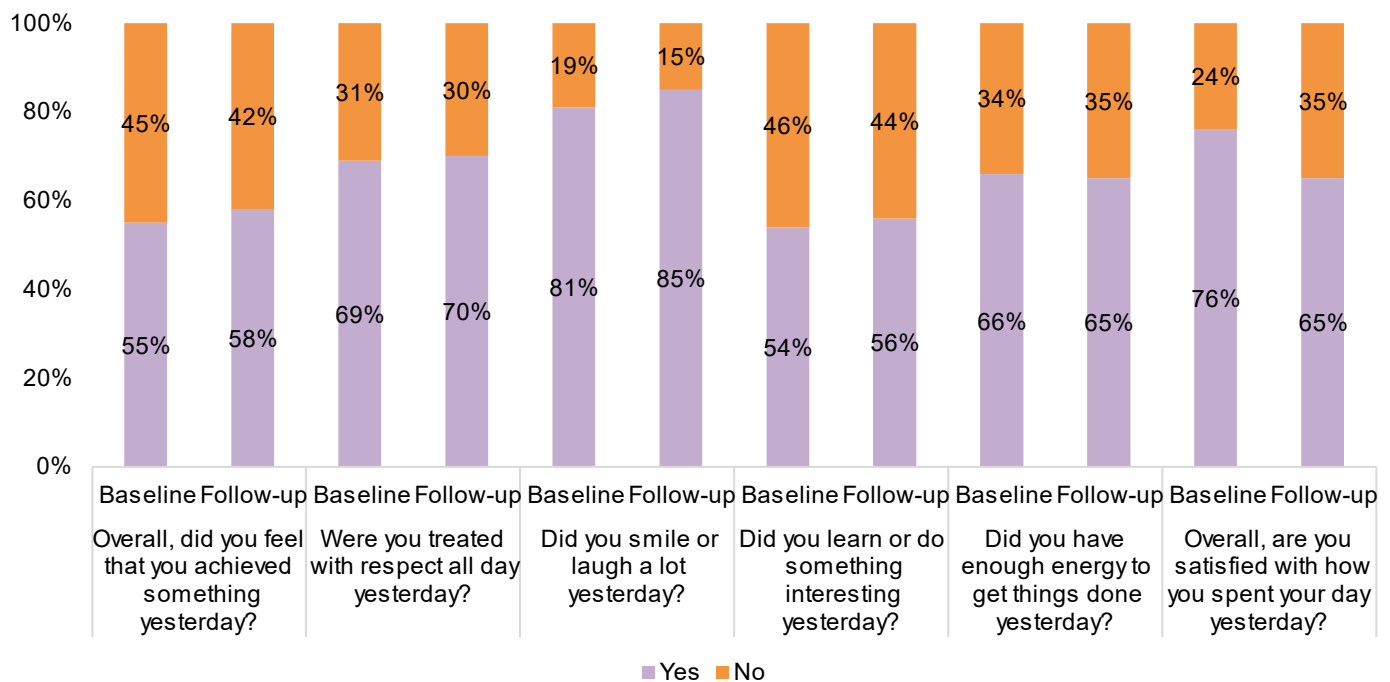
[School staff]

9.3.3 Enrichment participation was felt to have benefits for pupils' physical and mental health

In the pupil survey, pupils were asked to rate their overall life satisfaction on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 10 (completely). Results revealed a small increase in median life satisfaction score from 6 out of 10, to 7 out of 10 between the baseline and follow-up pupil surveys. However, responses to the other wellbeing questions in the survey remained broadly similar across timepoints^{[\[footnote 17\]](#)}, with 4 of the 6 items seeing small increases (1 to 4 percentage points) in positive responses, while the remaining 2 items showed a drop in positive responses of 1 (did you have enough energy to get things done yesterday?) and 11 percentage points (overall, how satisfied are you with how you spent your day yesterday?) ([Figure 24](#)).

Figure 24: Responses to wellbeing questions among pupils who reported that yesterday was a typical day

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: baseline (N =2,217) and follow-up (N = 2,871) pupil surveys.

Pupils in the focus groups who took part in a variety of sports activities talked about how participating had improved or helped them maintain their physical fitness. Pupils who took part in other kinds of enrichment activities talked more about the benefits the activity had on their mental health or wellbeing. This was attributed to a range of different factors including meeting other people with similar interests/experiences, a safe, supportive space being created within the activity, finding the activity itself calming, having more freedom and choice, and having fun, which helped them forget about more negative experiences they may have had during the day.

“It helps me because you can just forget about your day if you’ve had a bad day and just have a nice time.”

[Pupil]

9.3.4 The EPP did not appear to result in changes in school attendance

We compared schools’ attendance data from before the start of the pilot ([autumn and spring terms in the academic year 2023 to 2024](#) published by DfE) with data submitted by schools. Twenty-nine schools submitted attendance data for the last complete week they delivered enrichment activities as part of the follow-up school MI template (in February and March 2025). This data should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size.

Results showed that prior to the pilot, the median attendance figure was 90.5%,

while at the follow-up timepoint it was 91%. This change is broadly consistent with the national attendance picture for the academic year 2023 to 2024 compared with the academic year 2024 to 2025. National data for year-to-date attendance at the end of April 2025 showed an increase of 0.3% compared with the equivalent period in the 2023 to 2024 academic year (Department of Education, 2025). This suggests that the change in attendance observed for the pilot schools is likely to reflect overall trends in attendance, rather than pilot-specific change.

9.3.5 The pilot resulted in around half of enrichment providers having better relationships with schools, but otherwise the impact for enrichment providers appeared to be limited

Data from the enrichment provider survey indicated that just over half of enrichment providers who completed the survey felt that the pilot had resulted in improvements to the quality of the relationships they had with local schools (52%) and their understanding of local school and pupil enrichment needs (53%). Among enrichment providers that reported an improvement in the quality of their relationships with local schools, 76% felt that schools being more interested in their enrichment offer had contributed to this, while 85% felt that having a direct point of contact within schools had helped.

Less than half of respondents (42%) felt that the pilot had resulted in an improved alignment between the activities they offered and pupil interests, while 44% reported that there was no change. Similarly, 39% of respondents reported that their relationships with other enrichment providers had improved, while 44% reported that there was no change ([Table 11](#)). We note that across all the statements, ‘no change’ was the most prevalent response. This is likely to be because around one-third of enrichment providers who completed the survey reported that none of their delivery related to the EPP. Similarly, around half of the case study schools reported that they did not work with external enrichment providers. It therefore follows that the EPP was perceived to have made no difference for these enrichment providers. This is not entirely unsurprising given that several COs used delivery models where selection and uptake of the enrichment offer was left to schools. However, the proportion of enrichment providers who reported no involvement in the EPP in the survey, combined with the proportion of enrichment providers who reported that they were not involved in the EPP (so did not complete the survey or other evaluation activities), was unexpected.

Table 11: Enrichment provider views about the difference the EPP made for them

Substantial Small No Small Substantial Uns

	decline	decline	change	increase	increase	/Miss
The alignment of your organisation's enrichment offer with pupils' interests	0%	0%	44%	23%	19%	14'
The quality of the relationships between your organisation and local schools	0%	0%	31%	24%	28%	17'
Your organisation's relationships with other local enrichment providers	0%	0%	44%	24%	15%	17'
Your organisation's understanding of local school and pupil enrichment needs	0%	0%	35%	32%	21%	13'

Data source: follow-up enrichment provider survey (N = 78)

The qualitative data is consistent with these results, as enrichment providers reported that the main difference the pilot had made for them was improved relationships with schools. This was also reflected by some of the COs in their interviews. There were also individual examples of there being a sustained demand

for their services going forwards because they had new pupils taking part in their activities who they hoped would continue participating in years to come. However, as discussed in [Chapter 4](#), enrichment providers were under-represented within the qualitative data.

10. Results: What does a ‘good’ quality enrichment offer look like for schools and pupils?

The case studies also explored what a ‘good’ quality enrichment offer looks like from the perspective of school staff and pupils. This question was also reflected upon in the stakeholder interviews. From this data we identified 6 key themes which are discussed in turn below. Many of these themes overlap with or build on what pupils liked about enrichment activities and some of the outcomes enrichment activities were perceived to have led to.

In addition, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) was used to explore what ‘good’ looked like in terms of improving the case study school enrichment offers during the pilot. The results of this analysis are reported in the final section below.

10.1 A good enrichment offer provides choice

Both pupils and school staff talked about the importance of having a wide variety of different enrichment activities on offer. They recognised that not everyone has the same interests, therefore it was important to offer a range of activities so there was something everyone could participate in. School staff felt this was particularly important for encouraging pupils who might not otherwise engage in enrichment activities to participate.

“Variety, choice and targeting not just the same kids...trying to open it up so there’s different sports and activities to attract different kids. There’s no point in just hitting the top 10% again because they’re all getting stuff inside and outside of school. Just finding something that every individual likes, enjoys giving them something that they can have as a hobby and so

that they enjoy school that bit more as well.”

[School staff]

Pupils also talked extensively about the importance of choice as part of a good enrichment offer. This related to being able to choose what activities they wanted to take part in and having the freedom to make choices within those activities, for example, choosing what to make in a craft club. They also liked the flexibility of being able to try out new activities without any pressure to keep attending and that they could occasionally miss sessions without feeling like they were falling behind.

“I like that you can go, and you can try it out and like it’s not like a set thing that you need to do. It’s not like if you go once, you’ve got to keep going...if you don’t like it, you don’t have to go again. It’s not like a massive commitment or anything, and if you’re not there one week, it’s not a big deal...I was super tired because I’d been away from the weekend so I didn’t go to craft club this week, but it didn’t matter, there wasn’t anything that I’d like lost out on, like I can still go back and it’s not like a set time that I have to attend.”

[Pupil]

10.2 Good enrichment activities provide opportunities to spend time with and build relationships with likeminded people

Pupils felt that a key feature of a good enrichment activity was that it gave them the opportunity to spend more time with their friends doing something they enjoy. Similarly, they also felt that because the other pupils taking part in the enrichment activity wanted to be there, it gave them the chance to meet people and build relationships with other pupils with the same interests whom they might not otherwise have met. This was a key reason pupils valued having mixed year groups taking part in enrichment activities.

“You meet other people that are interested in things you are interested in.”

[Pupil]

School staff shared similar reflections about the importance of enrichment activities offering opportunities to make new friends. In addition, they also talked about how enrichment activities could help build relationships between staff and pupils. This was felt to have benefits in the classroom and to help change pupils' perspectives about their teachers, so they saw them as more than just their subject teacher.

“I think it's really good for building relationships with staff and students outside of the classroom, but equally, we've got so many staff, that offer something that has nothing to do with their subject. That actually is a passion that they have or talent that they have, and I think that's so good for relationships between staff and students because it reminds our students that that we all have talents...that kind of breaking some of the educational barriers down through enrichment. I think that's quite important.”

“Following on from that, it then makes some of those students easier to teach if you form that relationship[...].”

[School staff]

This point was reflected slightly differently by pupils, who tended to talk about the importance of having a 'good' staff member (that is someone they liked) delivering the enrichment activity as a key part of a good enrichment activity, rather than about the relationships that could be built between staff and pupils.

10.3 Good enrichment activities give pupils the chance to develop new skills and have new experiences

One of the things pupils most commonly reported liking about enrichment activities was that they gave them the opportunity to learn new skills ([see Chapter 8](#)), have new experiences and develop their interests. Consequently, they felt these opportunities should form a core part of a good enrichment activity. They talked about the importance of developing these skills via enrichment activities for helping

their future career prospects, giving them a sense of achievement, and building their confidence.

“Achieving new tricks. That feeling when you’ve been trying it for 20 minutes and you just get it. It’s the best feeling in the world. It makes you feel like you’re so happy and then you want to try it again and again.”

[Pupil talking about skateboarding]

“I wanted to do drama because I want to do it when I’m older, and also [to] speak, I wanted to get more confident in communication.”

[Pupil]

School staff also reflected on the importance of good enrichment for helping pupils to develop their skills. They talked about how good enrichment activities give pupils space for self-discovery and allow them to explore and follow their own interests. School staff working in particularly socio-economically disadvantaged areas also noted how low aspirations could be an issue, so they felt it was important to use enrichment activities to provide additional aspirations and interests for pupils.

“[Location] doesn’t have any A-level provision so there is very low aspirations for the young people here – so where we can give them additional aspirations and interests, we will endeavour to do this.”

[School staff]

10.4 Good enrichment activities are inclusive and accessible for all pupils, but not too overcrowded

Both school staff and pupils talked about the importance of making enrichment activities accessible for pupils. School staff talked about the importance of offering different types of activities to help encourage pupils with different interests, from

different cultural backgrounds, and those less likely to engage to participate. Pupils talked about a wider variety of ways to help make enrichment activities inclusive and accessible for pupils. These included:

- making sure information about activities was shared by teachers or on noticeboards so that all pupils were aware of what activities were on offer
- creating a safe space where pupils are welcomed
- having enough resources so that everyone who wants to take part, can
- offering activities at lunchtimes as not all pupils are able to stay after school due to transport logistics, caring commitments or clashes with other activities taking place after school
- having no requirements or restrictions on participation, so that anyone who wants to can participate, rather than participation being restricted to specific pupils

“[...] And timing, it’s just about being like accessible. So, lunchtime is obviously accessible to everyone. And just like the after-school ones [enrichment activities], they just don’t seem like many people can go because of their situations.”

[Pupil]

Pupils appreciated it where staff members had made efforts to make activities more accessible and gave examples including where staff members had provided additional support to neurodiverse students to help them participate in an activity, and the provision of a late bus to enable them to get home from after-school activities.

However, while pupils wanted the activities to be accessible for everyone, they also noted that activities should not be too over-crowded as it meant there were not enough resources to go around and/or that it put off other pupils from attending because of how crowded the session was.

10.5 Good enrichment activities are fun and enjoyable for pupils

Both school staff and pupils reported that a key aspect of a good enrichment activity

was that it was fun and enjoyable for pupils. Pupils noted that activities could be enjoyable for a variety of different reasons including matching pupils' interests, friends going or making new friends, because everyone who was there wanted to be there, and because they liked the staff member running the activity. Meanwhile, school staff tended to talk about this in relation to offering a variety of activities, so that pupils could find something they liked.

“About what I think makes a good enrichment. I think there are a lot of factors that kind of like go into it. It's got to be something you actually like. It's got to have like the right equipment and everything you need for it...in things like enrichments you get that bit more freedom to kind of just hang out, have some fun doing an activity. That you enjoy with some of your friends, and I just really appreciate that.”

[Pupil]

10.6 A good enrichment offer is informed by youth voice

Across the pilot stakeholders there was discussion about the importance of using youth voice to inform enrichment activities to ensure they matched pupils' interests. Indeed, many of the aspects that are perceived to make enrichment 'good' are subjective, so to ensure that enrichment is 'good' in line with the aspects outlined earlier in this section, it is important for providers and schools to understand what young people think and want, and to not assume.

A key role of the COs in the set-up phase of the pilot ([see Chapter 4](#)) was to undertake a needs assessment and find out what kinds of enrichment activities pupils were interested in. Many of the case study schools also offered ways for pupils to feed into enrichment activities they would like, such as through suggestions boxes or school council representatives. A subset of school staff also talked about how they review their enrichment offer to try and engage non-participating pupils. Pupils had mixed views about the extent to which their suggestions were actioned.

Pupils felt that being able to input into the activities and offer feedback was an important part of a good enrichment offer. This was both for making sure the activities offered matched pupil interests, and that each individual activity allowed

pupils to get the most from it.

“For the clubs to actually be chosen by the students. So, it’s not just like random clubs that not many people actually do. So actually, it comes from what students enjoy and want to do.”

[Pupil]

“Having that opportunity for feedback to make sure that the club is kind of catering for all those who are interested in it. And that if they are interested in that enrichment activity, then they’re actually getting the most out of it that they can.”

[Pupil]

10.7 What factors were important for improving the enrichment offers in the case study schools?

To understand what factors helped lead to a successful enrichment offer as part of the EPP, we undertook a QCA analysis ([see Chapter 3](#) and [Appendix D](#) for full details of this analysis). Based on the thematic analysis of all the interview and focus group data, 6 factors were identified as potentially important for achieving a successful outcome (that is increased pupil participation in enrichment activities).

It was hypothesised that the presence of each of these factors would contribute to increased pupil participation in enrichment activities. The school staff interview data was then used to code whether each factor was present or absent within each case study school. This revealed that 2 of the factors (schools offering at least some new enrichment activities during the school day, and schools offering at least some new activities on school premises) exactly overlapped. These 2 factors were therefore combined to leave following 5 factors for analysis:

- funding being provided to schools as part of the pilot
- good relationship between the school and the CO

- activities offered were responsive to pupil voice
- at least some new enrichment activities were offered during the school day and on school premises
- school used external enrichment providers as part of the pilot

This analysis resulted in 4 potential ‘causal recipes’ ([see Appendix D](#)), but there were some inconsistencies in the solutions. Consequently, the cases that appeared to be driving these inconsistencies were revisited. Both these cases were schools that had previously been discussed as a team due to uncertainties about whether the outcome had been achieved due to conflicting survey and interview data ([see Chapter 3](#)). These 2 schools were therefore removed from the analysis, and the analysis was re-run.

This parsimonious solution (the most simplified version) for this analysis identified 3 casual recipes ([Table 12](#)) as follows:

- using pupil voice to inform activities
- schools being given funding but without a good relationship with the CO
- school offering new activities during the school day and on school premises but not using external enrichment providers

These solutions accounted for 100% of cases and had a consistency of 100%.

Table 12: Parsimonious solutions from QCA analysis

Solutions	Raw coverage	Unique coverage	Consistency
Pupil voice used	0.57	0.43	1
Funding\GoodCORelationship	0.29	0.14	1
SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~ExternalProviders	0.43	0.29	1

Data source: fsQCA analysis. Note that ~ means ‘not’ and * means ‘and’

The parsimonious solution suggests that in order to increase pupil participation in enrichment activities, it is important to use pupil voice to inform the choice of activities offered. As pupil voice can lead to increased pupil participation on its own and accounted for 0.43 of cases in the analysis (unique coverage), it is clear that

future efforts to improve enrichment opportunities for pupils need to appropriately consult pupils and act upon their feedback. This result is consistent with data reported in [Chapter 7](#) about ensuring that the enrichment offer matches what pupils want and need.

Second, offering new activities during the school day (that is at lunchtimes or potentially as part of an enrichment morning or afternoon) and on school premises, in the absence of provision from external organisations, also appears to be important for increasing pupil participation. This is likely because offering activities during the school day and on school premises helps to overcome some of the barriers to pupil participation discussed in [Chapter 7](#), including being unable to stay after school due to lack of transport, or having other responsibilities and commitments after school. It also links with findings in [Chapter 7](#) where schools reported challenges with taking pupils off the school site to participate in enrichment activities. Although one goal of the pilot was for schools to use more external enrichment providers to deliver activities, this does not appear to be necessary for increasing pupil participation in enrichment activities. However, data reported in previous chapters does suggest that there are other benefits of using external providers, including being able to offer activities that school staff are unable to deliver and potentially reducing the workload for school staff.

Another combination of factors leading to increased participation in enrichment was where funding was given directly to the school, in the absence of a good relationship with the CO – this combination only accounted for a small proportion of cases but filled a gap in the absence of other solution combinations. However, it suggests that if funding is given directly to schools to support enrichment activities, then the quality of the relationship with the CO is unimportant. This is likely to be because the most consistently reported barrier to implementation across the pilot ([see Chapter 7](#)) was a lack of funding, and this primarily related to schools. For example, schools lacked funding to pay for external enrichment providers, transport, equipment and staff cover. Providing funding directly to schools as part of the EPP is likely to have helped to overcome these barriers and in turn contributed to increased pupil uptake of activities. For example, the school interviews showed that schools who received funding from their CO as part of the EPP used it to buy additional resources to support new or existing enrichment activities. School staff felt that having better and more resources had led to increased interest and participation from pupils, resulting in more pupils taking part in the activities. Overall, it appears that factors identified in the QCA as being important for increasing pupil participation in enrichment activities, are factors that help mitigate some of the key barriers to participation identified in [Chapter 7](#).

11. Results: Sustainability of the partnership model beyond the EPP

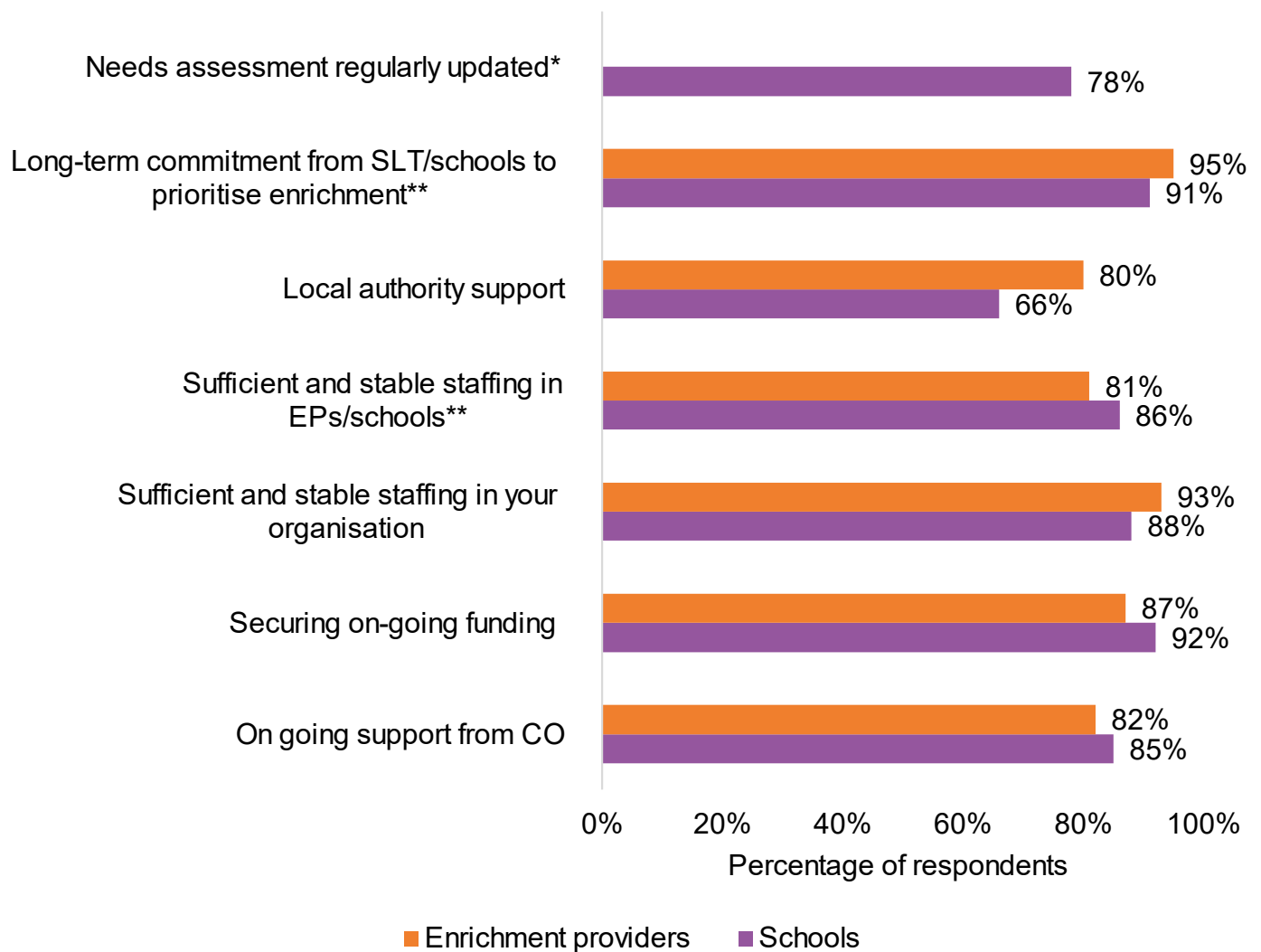
11.1 Most schools and enrichment providers wanted to continue working with each other after the pilot, but lack of funding was a significant barrier

Around three-quarters (76%) of schools who completed the follow-up survey reported that they would like to continue working in partnership with local enrichment providers after the EPP has ended and over 80% of schools also wanted to work with more external providers in the future. Similarly, 79% of enrichment providers who completed the follow-up survey reported that they would like to continue working in partnership with local schools after the end of the EPP^[footnote 18]. However, both schools (79%) and enrichment providers (74%) reported that securing on-going funding would be ‘very important’ for enabling them to work together going forwards. However, only 19% of enrichment providers who completed the survey reported that they had sufficient funding secured to enable them to deliver the same number of activities next year. Among enrichment providers who reported that the EPP accounted for part of their delivery, 25% had funding secured to deliver the same number of activities the next year.

Other key factors cited by schools and enrichment providers to enable them to continue working together included a long-term commitment from schools/school leaders to give a high priority to enrichment activities (95% of enrichment providers; 91% of schools), and sufficient and stable staffing within their own organisation (93% enrichment providers; 88% schools) ([see also Figure 25](#)). Over 80% of schools and enrichment providers felt that on-going support from the CO would be important, while around three-quarters of schools felt that updating the needs assessment would be important.

Figure 25: Percentage of schools and enrichment providers who felt that each factor was ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ important to continuing to work together

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Data source: school (N = 112) and enrichment provider (N = 70) follow-up surveys.
 *Question only asked to schools. **Question worded differently for schools and enrichment providers. First option wording option in each item is the question asked to schools, while the second option is the question asked to enrichment providers.

These results were consistent with the qualitative data, where there was agreement across schools, enrichment providers, COs and stakeholders that on-going funding beyond the end of the pilot was needed to enable activities to be sustained. This was particularly important for ensuring that schools could continue to use external enrichment providers, as they needed to have funds available to pay them to deliver activities.

“We looked at sustainability options, but you’ve got enrichment providers potentially who out of goodwill have delivered 1 or 2 events in a school for free of charge, which has been fantastic, and now ultimately, they need to cover their costs. So, the next time the school try and engage with them, there might be a price tag on that session. And again, that’s just that’s sort of just budget restrictions and sort of session availability restrictions that

you encounter every day.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Just under half of COs planned to continue working with at least some of schools involved in the EPP after the pilot. Within this group of COs, 3 main approaches were planned to support sustainability beyond the end of the pilot:

- committing their own funding to support enrichment provision in these schools
- sharing responsibility for maintaining and keeping the enrichment website (built as part of the EPP) up to date between the EPP leads at the schools involved
- moving to a paid subscription model schools could sign-up to

The other COs were either still considering options for sustainability or reported that they would be unable to continue working in the CO role because they needed funding to enable them to do this. These COs reported that after the pilot they would be focusing on other priorities or projects that they did have funding for.

This stop in activity was felt to be detrimental if the pilot were to be continued in the future because a lot the work COs had done to build relationships with schools would be lost. This was because the short timeframe meant that these new relationships had not had sufficient time to become fully established and embedded. Furthermore, COs felt the use of staff on fixed term contracts meant a lot of the learning would also be lost as these people moved on to new roles. Consequently, it was felt that even if the pilot was restarted in the same areas, it would not be possible to pick up from where it finished. This indicates the importance of having a sufficiently long initial funding period for relationships to be established and learning to be shared within and across organisations to enable long-term partnerships to be built.

“A real shame to see, [the pilot] not sort of phase out [longer-term/to other areas]. I think there’s always that risk isn’t there with pilot programmes - you get all these learnings, all these amazing experiences and ultimately you have to stop until something else happens or when the report comes out to carry on those learnings.”

[Coordinating organisation]

11.2 Scaling up the EPP and transferability to other geographic areas

COs generally spoke positively about the potential to scale up the EPP and or transfer it to other geographic locations. Although they also noted that there were many practical hurdles to overcome before the model tested in the pilot could be sustainable or transferred to other areas (such as being able to offer transport and additional funding, see Barriers, [Chapter 7](#)). Generally, the barriers to scaling up were very closely related to the reported barriers for implementation, with the largest barrier being funding.

11.2.1 There is large variability of school-specific context which means undertaking an initial needs assessment and keeping it updated is important

While there was a lot of positivity about the potential adaptability of the pilot to other areas, concerns were raised that between-school differences such as staggered or short lunchtime breaks, or differences in the length of a typical school day, which meant it would be important to undertake an initial needs assessment in each new area to understand what adaptations would need to be made. In addition, new relationships between schools and enrichment providers in new geographic areas would need to be established and this takes time and a dedicated (ideally local) person to lead on this. It is also important to regularly update the needs assessment as pupils' needs and interests may change over time.

11.2.2 The views of the COs on transferability differed to some extent by the type of delivery model used

COs that had used a website-model, generally felt that it would be relatively easy to extend their approach to other geographical regions. However, they noted that it would then come down to individual barriers within the school or enrichment provider setting about whether the offer would be taken up or not. It was also highlighted by a CO that did not build a website as part of the EPP, that website information can quickly get out of date and a dedicated person would be required to maintain and update website content, which has costs attached.

“They had a company come in to create this website. Now my question would be so what’s going to happen with the website when the project’s finished? Because even if you own the website, you need sustainability, you need somebody to actually just keep it going.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Other COs were more optimistic. These COs felt that with the right CO in place, sufficient time to build relationships, and adequate funding, a variety of the delivery models tested during the EPP could be extended to other geographical areas, with slight adaptations. Their view was that having the CO as a central connection was an efficient way to link up schools and enrichment providers.

It was also noted that certain aspects of the EPP, such as networking and building relationships (for example, between local schools) could be more sustainable. However, the pilot timeline was felt to have been too short to be able to identify differences between the different delivery models with a view to informing future scale-up.

11.2.3 There are some geography-specific considerations that need to be taken into account

In terms of specific geographical aspects, generic barriers to successful transfer of the pilot to other areas were identified, such as lack of transport and cost of running additional buses, particularly in rural or under-funded areas. Successful expansion to other areas would depend on how easily pupils can access the provision and having a deep understanding of the needs of a particular geographical area. This understanding would be dependent on building successful partnerships in these areas in the first place.

“Again, I think [building relationships with] the schools would be a struggle initially, until you build that partnership with the schools. Again, it’s getting to know who the right person is to speak to. And you know what time they’ve got to invest into the programme. So I think that ... maybe the only barrier I would say is just building those relationships with the schools.”

[Coordinating organisation]

11.3 Learning for future projects

Stakeholders from across the pilot had the following reflections about aspects of the pilot that could support the implementation of future projects.

Having a local coordinator was helpful

There was agreement across the pilot stakeholders that having someone with a coordinating function that can mediate between schools and enrichment providers is needed, like the role of the CO in the EPP. Schools reported that they simply did not have the capacity to organise additional enrichment provision on top of their other responsibilities. However, there were multiple suggestions as to who this could be, such as a local authority in a CO role, or another organisation already working with schools who could support with keeping the enrichment website up to date.

“But from an ongoing sort of longevity, it just needs somebody in the centre of that, and it could be from a local authority perspective. That’s what I think...[or another organisation]...It’s only an hour a week. It can be no more than that. Just keep that database updated so you’ve got one person in the centre.”

[Coordinating organisation, website-model]

It would be important to have a named enrichment lead in schools for similar pilots/projects

It was felt that having a named enrichment lead within schools was important for ensuring effective roll-out, as it gave other organisations a key point of contact. It also meant that they could share information about activities with other school staff.

“So, what we found is having somebody central within each school that we can send this to is a direct link to say ‘they’re looking for that sort of information’. So, passing that directly to them is more likely to get the school to be able to opt into that and buy into that and see the benefits of what they are doing.”

[Coordinating organisation]

Understanding how schools work and building relationships with them is vital

COs who had less well-established relationships with schools at the beginning of the pilot frequently reflected on how much they had learnt about building relationships and working with schools.

“I’ve learned loads about building relationships with people in different organisations, ways to do that, ways to communicate and tie people down ways to maintain relationships. So that’s been really interesting and how you do that on e-mail as well and phone in different ways.”

[Coordinating organisation]

It was also felt by some COs and schools that there needed to be a wider awareness of how schools work, what they need (including safeguarding arrangements) and how they are structured, in order to support relationship-building and provide the most useful provision. It is also important for external organisations to be aware of the time schools need to respond and put appropriate arrangements in place for an activity to take place.

“[...] I think, at the minute, the relationship that we have with [organisation name] is that I can understand why they get frustrated that we have to say no to things. But I’m not sure they’re quite empathising with the fact that we’ve got ... less staff. They’ve got ... a lot of staff to be able to facilitate. And ...our concerns around safeguarding are a bit different to them ...So there needs to be that realisation.”

[School staff]

“Sometimes a provider will come to school and say I’ve got a slot in 3 weeks’ time to do [activity] just again, it’s that Ying and Yang of understanding that schools do not operate [in that way]...You can’t plan something to happen in 3 weeks’ time. You need to plan something to happen, a minimum of a term.”

[Coordinating organisation]

To help foster the relationships between schools and enrichment providers it was also felt to be important for schools to meet any external providers in advance of making the commitment, and to also give pupils the chance to meet providers.

School culture is important

A positive, holistic school culture and parent/carer support were also mentioned as a requirement for future success. There needs to be buy-in from the school's senior leader team, wider school staff, pupils and parents, as well as enrichment providers to increase pupil participation in enrichment activities.

“Because they're quite hierarchical schools, aren't they? Because if the Heads are on-board then the whole school [is] on board, and I think that gives whoever the enrichment [lead] is, ...more space and opportunity to develop.”

[Coordinating organisation]

“For us enrichment works because there is an offer every night. It works because before the students start here, it's sold to the parents. So, it's an opportunity that is available all the time. So, I think getting the buy in from the parents before they start at school, again, the word out there that there is these opportunities.”

[School staff]

Providing training to school staff could be more sustainable but does not solve the capacity issues in schools

Schools that worked with external enrichment providers generally had positive experiences, but despite capacity challenges, many schools still opted to run enrichment activities in-house to help build relationships with pupils and minimise costs, in a situation where budgets are restricted. However, it was suggested that external providers could be brought in to up-skill school staff, or to cover areas that school staff are unable to cover.

“Rather than using external providers to offer enrichment to our students, I would love to use external providers to up-skill our staff, our staff can then use it year on year on year and I think that's a more cost-effective model anyway, more sustainable[...] External providers have their benefits and it's lovely for students to meet new people, to have new skills. But I just think there's nothing more important for us as a school community than

our relationships that our staff and students have, and that's only something that comes from schools offering those things predominantly in-house. So, I think the way we viewed it is our external providers are there for the areas that we're not able to offer...the likes of Mechanics and Construction and Beauty Therapy,...but where we can offer it in-house, I think that is our priority and then we use the external as kind of complementary to that."

[School staff]

However, we note that training school staff would not solve the capacity challenges many schools reported experiencing. Although it might allow schools to offer different types of activities that are more aligned with pupil interests, rather than more activities.

Youth voice is important

Feedback from young people was thought to be crucial for the ongoing success of the pilot and it was felt to be advisable to get regular youth voice to continuously improve the enrichment offer, being mindful that young people's needs and preferences can change over the course of a year.

"Youth voice feels really important in this area, and I think it's something that has become a lot more wide[spread]. But it's also something that keeps on being reinforced through everything- through a lot of different programmes, a lot of different routes that pupil voice is so incredibly important to creating good offer."

[Stakeholder]

Agreeing expectations from all organisations at the beginning of the programme

It was agreed that expectations of all organisations (delivery partners, COs, schools and enrichment providers) involved in the pilot need to be clearer from the beginning. This included a better understanding of how organisations should be working together (including the role of the CO), more guidance on what makes a 'good enrichment activity' and clearer processes on accountability, including systems for tracking and monitoring progress.

“At the beginning,[...] set expectations at every single level a bit more clearly. So, what is expected of schools? What schools would need to provide, expectations of coordinating organisations”

[Stakeholder]

Linked to this, administrative support such as sharing documentation or templates and agreeing on safeguarding requirements should be discussed early on to support all organisations in their planning and communication. This could take the form of a central resource hub.

“Having a clearer centre of resources would be incredibly helpful.... if I was doing it again, I’d have, I think a bank of proforma letters [and] proforma surveys”

[Stakeholder]

12. Conclusions and learning points

This research sought to understand whether the pilot had achieved the short-term outcomes set out in the theory of change. These included improved relationships between schools and local enrichment providers; improved knowledge of the needs of local schools, pupils, and enrichment providers; improved ability to source additional funding for local enrichment activities; and increased uptake of enrichment activities among pupils. The key conclusions are set out below.

12.1 Conclusions

The needs assessments offered insights into the needs and interests of pupils and schools and were important for improving pupil uptake.

At the start of the EPP, COs undertook detailed needs assessments to understand what kinds of enrichment activities schools and pupils wanted, which offered

important insights into each local area. Where learning from these needs assessments was then used to inform enrichment delivery, the QCA indicated that this understanding helped improve pupil uptake of enrichment activities.

There were also instances of COs incorporating pupil voice throughout the delivery period so that they could get continuous input and feedback from young people. For example, some COs trained pupils to quality assure enrichment activities. This involved training pupils to observe enrichment activities, talk to the pupils attending them to capture their views about the activities, and then provide feedback about the quality of the activities being offered to the enrichment providers. In these cases, the COs expected enrichment providers to act on this feedback and make alterations to their enrichment delivery accordingly. COs felt this approach had helped ensure that the activities on offer were high quality and met pupils' needs.

There was some evidence that the EPP led to improved relationships between schools and enrichment providers.

This key goal of the EPP was partially achieved. In the school follow-up survey, 65% of respondents felt that the quality of their relationships with external enrichment providers had improved because of the EPP. In addition, the percentage of schools who reported having established links with external enrichment providers increased from 45% at baseline to 72% at follow-up. Meanwhile, the enrichment provider survey showed that 52% of respondents felt the quality of their organisation's relationships with local schools had improved. However, while improvements were observed, there remained sizable proportions of schools and enrichment providers who did not report better relationships by the end of the pilot.

On average, schools added a small number of additional activities to their enrichment offer during the pilot.

The school MI and interview/focus group data suggested that schools tended to have slightly more enrichment activities by the end of the pilot. These activities were frequently informed by pupil voice activities undertaken by COs during the set-up phase to understand what pupils wanted and needed from enrichment activities. Furthermore, schools were more satisfied with their enrichment offer at the end of the pilot, this included the quality, variety and amount of enrichment activities they offered. These results may indicate that the EPP helped schools improve their enrichment offer and increase the number and diversity of enrichment activities available.

Most schools reported positive changes to their enrichment offer but a sizeable minority of schools (18% to 40%) reported that the EPP resulted in no changes to various aspects of their enrichment offer.

Most schools who participated in the EPP reported positive experiences and felt that

it had helped them improve various aspects of their enrichment offer. For example, 70% of schools felt their enrichment offer was better aligned with pupil needs and interests. However, there was a sizeable minority of schools (18% to 40%), spread across different COs, who reported in the individual survey questions that the EPP had resulted in no changes to certain aspects of their enrichment offer. This included no changes to the number of external providers they used (32%), their understanding of pupils' enrichment needs or interests (23%), and their ability to identify additional funding sources to support enrichment activities (40%). While the school survey indicated that school staff had more capacity to deliver enrichment activities at the end of the EPP (48% compared with 31% at baseline) this was not backed up by the qualitative data, where school staff capacity was consistently reported as a key challenge. Overall, this suggests that schools had varied experiences of taking part in the EPP and that while some schools had positive experiences and made changes to their enrichment offer, for other schools the EPP offered limited benefits.

The pilot resulted in more schools using external enrichment providers to deliver enrichment activities.

At the end of the pilot, more schools reported using external enrichment providers to deliver enrichment activities (67% compared with 56% at baseline) and schools were keen to continue working with external providers beyond the end of the pilot. This was especially the case where school staff did not have the skills and/or facilities to be able to deliver the activity themselves. However, only 11% of schools who completed the follow-up survey agreed that they would look for an external provider rather than using their own staff if they wanted to deliver a new enrichment activity in the future. This may in part be due to the costs of using external providers, as 54% of schools who completed the follow-up survey reported that a lack of funding to pay external providers was a key barrier to EPP implementation. In addition, some schools were keen to receive training to help them deliver additional enrichment activities as they felt this was a more sustainable option. Although, training school staff to deliver additional activities may not help overcome the staff capacity challenges experienced by schools.

While 52% of enrichment providers felt their relationships with schools had improved, 31% to 60% of enrichment providers reported that the EPP had resulted in no changes to various aspects of their enrichment offer.

This included 31% of enrichment providers who reported that the EPP had led to 'no change' in the quality of their relationships with local schools, 35% of enrichment providers who reported 'no change' to their understanding of local school and pupil needs, and 60% who reported 'no change' to their capacity (staff and funding) to deliver activities. Around one-third (32%) of enrichment providers reported that they

did not deliver any activities as part of the pilot, which may partially account for these results. For example, among the 31% of enrichment providers who reported that the EPP had led to 'no change' in the quality of their relationships with local schools, just over half also reported that they did not deliver any activities as part of the EPP. However, it is also possible that schools did not take-up the activities on offer, or that the coordination between schools and enrichment providers was not always effective, though there is little evidence to help understand why this was the case.

Evidence about whether the pilot led to increased uptake of enrichment activities among pupils was mixed.

Results of the follow-up surveys with schools and enrichment providers indicated that over 70% of schools and 45% of enrichment providers felt that the total number of pupils participating in enrichment activities had increased. Meanwhile, the school MI data, which was completed by around 40% of schools, presented a mixed picture; with some types of activities (for example, sports and fitness, performing arts and careers, personal development and life skills) seeing higher numbers of pupils participating, while for other activities pupil numbers stayed the same (for example, volunteering and social action) or decreased (for example, debating and public speaking). The pupil survey (case study schools only) suggested that the total number of pupils taking part in enrichment activities at baseline and follow-up was similar or slightly lower. However, the pupil surveys only capture a sub-sample of the pilot activity and therefore should be interpreted with caution.

The school surveys and interviews indicated that the pilot was implemented differently in different areas and schools, and these conflicting results may also be reflective of the different experiences schools and enrichment providers had during the pilot. Furthermore, it is possible that the follow-up evaluation happened too soon for increased pupil uptake to be consistently observed. There is also the added complexity of the closure of NCST and the pilot activities ending after only 2 school terms, which resulted in some coordination and delivery activity tailing off towards the end of the pilot, which may, in turn, have affected pupil uptake.

There was also some evidence from the school survey that participation among socio-economically disadvantaged pupils had increased, as 60% of schools felt that the EPP had led to increased participation for these pupils. However, socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils were still less likely to take part in enrichment activities than their peers.

Enrichment activities have the potential to offer a wide range of benefits to pupils, but not all of these benefits can be attributed to the pilot, and there was no difference in pupils' sense of school belonging or school attendance.

Consistent with previous research, the data from the pupil focus groups suggests that taking part in enrichment activities can help pupils learn new skills and have new experiences, meet other pupils with similar interests and make new friends, support physical and mental health, and lead to improved confidence. These benefits were common to enrichment activities delivered specifically through the EPP and to activities that already existed before the EPP began. However, it is important to note that the number of pupils where these outcomes can be attributed to the pilot is likely to be relatively small, as schools were typically offering few additional enrichment activities because of the pilot.

In addition, despite positive indications that enrichment activities can help build relationships with staff and pupils, the quantitative data did not show changes in school belonging or school attendance. There are several possible reasons for this. Firstly, the case study schools already had substantial enrichment offers before the pilot, so adding a small number of additional enrichment activities may have limited impact on school belonging and attendance. Secondly, evidence of increased uptake of activities among pupils was mixed, meaning there may not have been sufficient numbers of pupils taking part in new activities for shifts in school belonging or attendance to be observed across the case study schools. Thirdly, in the theory of change it was anticipated that it would take longer for these types of outcomes to be observed, and it is possible the pilot timescale was insufficient to see these types of changes. Finally, it is important to consider if/how activities delivered by external enrichment providers on or off school premises would be expected to improve pupils' sense of school belonging, as these activities would not involve building relationships with school staff and, if the activity is delivered off school premises, potentially not with other pupils either.

What does good enrichment look like?

The case study data revealed that a 'good' enrichment offer for schools and pupils:

- provides choice about what activities pupils can take part in
- gives pupils the opportunity to meet, spend time with and build relationships with likeminded people
- gives pupils the chance to develop new skills and have new experiences
- is inclusive and accessible to all pupils, but not too overcrowded
- is fun and enjoyable for pupils
- is informed by pupil voice

Using pupil voice to inform enrichment activities, offering at least some new enrichment activities during the school day and on school premises, and

providing schools with funding were identified as 3 different routes for increasing pupil participation in enrichment activities.

This suggests that future work to improve enrichment uptake amongst pupils should focus on these 3 elements. It is important to note that these factors helped to overcome some of the key barriers to implementation encountered during the pilot, which is likely why they were important for success. Having a good relationship with the CO was a helpful facilitator, but this was not necessary for improving pupil uptake of enrichment activities, nor was the use of external providers. Some schools increased uptake in the absence of a good relationship with the CO and/or without using external providers. However, there were other benefits of using COs and external providers reported across the data, including being able to offer activities school staff could not, and in some cases, reducing the burden on school staff. Further research into effective models of regional coordination of enrichment, conducted over a longer time period to allow the model to 'bed-in', would be required to capture any longer-term benefits, challenges and facilitators.

12.2 Key learning points

While the coordination model provided some additional capacity within the system as it allowed COs to conduct needs assessments with schools and raise the profile of enrichment, the pilot itself appeared to have limited success in meeting some of its objectives. In part, this was due to the short timeframe, the model by which funding was deployed, as well as external challenges beyond the control of the delivery teams. Future initiatives to support enrichment in schools should consider the following learning points.

A longer timeframe should be given to allow activities to be planned, embedded and sustained.

Stakeholders from across the pilot consistently reported challenges with the pilot timeline during both the set-up and delivery phases of the project. This related both to the short timescales but also the timing of activities within school academic years. In particular, the alignment of the funding with financial rather than academic years meant that delivery stopped part-way through the academic year, when in some cases it was felt activities were just getting underway. The short timeline also had implications for sustainability, as the new relationships formed during the pilot were still relatively fragile and, in many cases, it was felt these relationships would likely be lost when the funding ended. Consequently, stakeholders felt that 2 key changes were needed for similar projects:

- the set-up phase should start earlier in the school year and last longer to allow new activities to be planned in time for the following academic year and avoid clashes with school exam periods
- the delivery period should last at least one full academic year and ideally longer, to give activities the chance to embed and for potential outcomes to be observed, including any differences between the delivery models used

It should also be recognised that the challenges created by the tight timeline could have been exacerbated by delays with the budget reprofile sign-off for the delivery partners. This delayed the recruitment of some of the key delivery roles for the project. Allowing more time for the delivery or speeding up the approval processes may help overcome this challenge.

Consider ways of embedding pupil voice throughout the programme so that input from young people can inform delivery on an on-going basis.

Where COs used pupil voice on an on-going basis as part of the EPP, they felt this had helped ensure that the enrichment activities were high quality and met pupils' needs.

Reconsider funding alignment and distribution.

Any future funding for similar projects should be aligned with academic year(s) to support school participation. In addition, a key barrier to the uptake of enrichment offers was that schools were unable to pay external enrichment providers to deliver, while enrichment providers also lacked funding to deliver to schools for free.

Furthermore, sourcing additional funding to support enrichment delivery appeared to be one of the most difficult aspects of the pilot for COs. Reviewing the distribution of funding provided to different stakeholders, and to schools in particular, could help to overcome some of these barriers.

Where COs provided schools with small amounts of funding as part of the EPP (for example, to cover the costs of the schools' EPP Lead attending meetings), schools chose to repurpose this funding to pay for external enrichment providers and/or to purchase resources to support enrichment activities delivered by school staff. The QCA showed that the provision of this funding directly to schools was a key causal factor for improving pupil uptake of enrichment activities during the pilot.

In the context that in the EPP most of the funding was provided to the delivery partners and COs, consideration should be given to an alternative funding distribution, so that in future, a proportion of the funding is given directly to schools to support enrichment. This would give schools the flexibility to decide where funding is best spent, depending on their particular barriers and needs. This would need to be considered in the context of longer-term delivery and embedding successful

enrichment delivery beyond the end of any funding period.

Having a named enrichment lead in schools is helpful so COs and enrichment providers know who to contact, but staff capacity remains a challenge.

Having a direct point of contact to a dedicated enrichment lead at the school was a key facilitator for implementing the pilot activities. However, the capacity of these school staff members was a challenge as many held multiple other additional responsibilities within the school, which they needed to juggle and prioritise. This meant that at times COs struggled to contact them and schools struggled to respond to opportunities within the timeframes required to take them up, as they needed to plan the activity (such as, arrange rooms/transport) and complete risk and safeguarding assessments. This suggests that schools need a longer lead time to plan and take-up enrichment activities, especially if they take place off school premises. It is important to consider who should hold the lead role in the school as the single point of contact for COs and how it fits with any other additional responsibilities the staff member already holds. Some COs felt that this role worked best when the enrichment lead held a non-teaching role as they had more time/capacity to respond.

COs should have a strong understanding of how to engage and work with schools.

It was clear throughout the pilot that having previous relationships with, or experience of working with secondary schools was a key delivery facilitator for COs. MATs and charity sector organisations with a strong track-record of working with schools generally found both the recruitment of schools and subsequent delivery easier because they better understood the potential barriers and how to overcome them. For example, some organisations offered funding to cover staff time for networking events, while others offered taster activities to the schools, which increased subsequent buy-in to the EPP because they liked what had been offered. Seeking COs with this experience by tightening the criteria required to demonstrate this and/or providing COs with support and guidance or 'top tips' at the beginning of the project would likely be helpful for engaging schools.

Consider commissioning the evaluation of future projects alongside the delivery commissioning.

One of the key challenges relating to the evaluation particularly in the early stages of the EPP was the overlap between the evaluation activities and the needs assessments being undertaken by the COs. Aligning the commissioning of the delivery and evaluation aspects of the pilot and allowing time for the evaluation and delivery teams to work together would enable them to agree data collection needs before the participants (in this case, the COs, schools and enrichment providers) are

on-boarded. Aligning delivery and evaluation data collection processes to be streamlined and enable data sharing arrangements to put in place promptly could reduce the burden of participation on schools.

12.3 Key limitations of the research

During the course of the pilot there were changes/factors outside the control of the delivery team and the evaluation team, specifically the calling of the 2024 general election (and subsequent pre-election period) and the announcement and resultant closure of one of the delivery partners, NCST. On 22 May 2024, a general election was called for 4 July 2024. This was the week before baseline data collection was due to start. However, due to the pre-election period, the baseline data ([see Chapter 3](#)) collection had to be paused while permission to undertake it during the pre-election period was sought. Consequently, baseline data collection started later in the summer term than planned and ran until the school summer holidays. This meant that the baseline response rates to the evaluation activities were lower than expected.

In November 2024, it was announced that NCST would be wound down and closed at the end of March 2025. Although the closure date coincided with the end of the programme, it provided uncertainty about the profile of the EPP, as many of the organisations involved in the EPP had hoped that the timeframe would be extended beyond March 2025. This announcement made it clear that no extension would be forthcoming. The main delivery challenges reported were where staff members on fixed-term contracts moved on to new positions before the end of the pilot, resulting in reduced or tailed-off delivery in some areas during the last few months of the delivery period. There is also a risk that people responding to the evaluation's follow-up activities responded differently with this knowledge, meaning the results were different than they otherwise might have been, especially around sustainability.

Small sample sizes for enrichment providers.

Response rates from enrichment providers at both baseline and follow-up were lower than anticipated for both the MI templates and follow-up survey. This means that responses only represented a small proportion of enrichment providers who were involved with the EPP. In addition, as the enrichment provider MI data was designed to complement the school MI data, this resulted in gaps in understanding about the total number of activities offered in or via schools. There are several potential reasons for this. Firstly, some enrichment providers had very limited involvement with the programme. For example, in some 'signposting' approaches to

delivery, an enrichment provider might be listed on a website, but it was up to schools to take-up the offer. In addition, there were enrichment providers who, when contacted about the evaluation activities at both baseline and follow-up, were unaware of the pilot and/or stated that they did not deliver enrichment activities with schools or school-aged pupils. Over half of these enrichment providers subsequently withdrew from the data collection. It is possible that there may have been other organisations in a similar position but who did not contact the evaluation team. Similarly, only around half of the case study schools were working with external enrichment providers, and only a few of these providers were willing and able to take part in an interview, meaning that the qualitative insights from enrichment providers are also limited. Furthermore, participation of enrichment providers fluctuated over time with new providers being brought into the EPP throughout the programme. Ensuring that all enrichment providers (including those in 'signposting' models) are provided with core information about the delivery and evaluation of future similar programmes would help to overcome these challenges.

Case study sample.

Delays to school recruitment meant that for baseline data collection to take place, case study schools were selected before all schools had been recruited to the EPP. This limited the pool of schools to select from and meant there was no information about their level of engagement with the programme to inform this selection. At the time, there was also limited information about the model of delivery each CO was using. An additional issue was that, of the 16 case study schools, 2 dropped out of the evaluation at baseline and another mid-way through the evaluation due to staff capacity. This meant there were fewer COs represented in the case studies than originally planned. Allowing more set-up time (see Learning Points) would help to overcome this, as it would mean case studies could be selected once all schools were on-boarded and more information about each delivery model was available.

Inability to link data from baseline and follow-up pupil surveys.

Delays to school on-boarding to the pilot and consequent data sharing with the evaluation team (to tell them which schools were taking part and provide contact details for the EPP lead within each school) meant pupil details were not available in time to pre-populate the baseline pupil surveys. This means that although it was possible to pre-populate the follow-up surveys with pupil details (to allow subsequent matching to the National Pupil Database, beyond the scope of this project), it was not possible to link the baseline and endpoint surveys on a 1-to-1 basis.

Consequently, the analysis reported here was restricted to descriptive statistics. Again, a longer set-up phase would help to address this challenge in future projects.

Due to the short timeline of the pilot, some COs targeted recruitment at schools they knew would be more likely to respond positively or had a

particular interest in enrichment.

This approach means it is possible that these schools were not the core target audience for the pilot, given the aim was to improve enrichment provision, especially for pupils not already taking part in any activities. Providing additional guidance to COs about which schools to approach would help to overcome this, as well as more time for recruitment so that COs/delivery teams can spend more time explaining the offer to 'new' or unfamiliar schools.

Not all schools and enrichment providers collect detailed data on enrichment participation.

The evaluation plan workshops indicated that schools and enrichment providers routinely collected detailed information about enrichment participation. However, this was not the case for all schools or enrichment providers. Agreeing a data collection approach with the delivery partners for schools, enrichment providers and COs to follow would ensure that sufficiently detailed data was consistently collected across all stakeholders. However, it is also important to ensure that data collection asks are proportionate and do not place undue burden on schools and enrichment providers.

Quantitative evaluation results are indicative due to the evaluation design and statistical analyses used.

The evaluation was not designed to be an experimental impact evaluation therefore there are no counterfactual results. This combined with the use of descriptive, rather than inferential statistics in the evaluation (owing to the limitations of the data collection), means that the quantitative results should be treated as indicative. In addition, the samples of respondents (for example, schools) at baseline and follow-up do not exactly overlap meaning that any differences observed may be due to variation in the make-up of respondents rather than change caused by the pilot; the extent of this cannot be measured. To obtain more robust results, further research should be conducted, ideally with a longer pilot timeline.

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Appendix A: Original design

The original plan was to use a nested case study design for this evaluation. However, delays with data sharing affected case study school recruitment which meant changes had to be made to the study design which resulted in the design described in the main report. Below are details of the original nested case study design for reference. The text is taken from the original evaluation plan so is written in the future tense.

A.1 Nested case study data collection approach

To gather more in-depth insights into how the pilot has been delivered, the evaluation will use 'nested' case study design based around four coordinating organisations (COs) ([see Figure 26](#) for an example of one case study). This approach will allow the collection of detailed insights from a sample of organisations participating in the EPP, which is more feasible than collecting this data across the whole pilot. It also has the advantage of minimising the burden on schools, enrichment providers and COs taking part in the pilot where possible.

Each of these 4 COs case studies will contain:

- interviews with a key member of staff from 4 of the local enrichment providers working with that CO
- four 'nested' school case studies (consisting of staff and pupil focus groups as well as pupil surveys and MI)

This means that the 16 school case studies will partially overlap with the case study of their respective CO, as they will also draw on interview data from the same 4 local enrichment providers and the CO, thus maximising data collection efficiency.

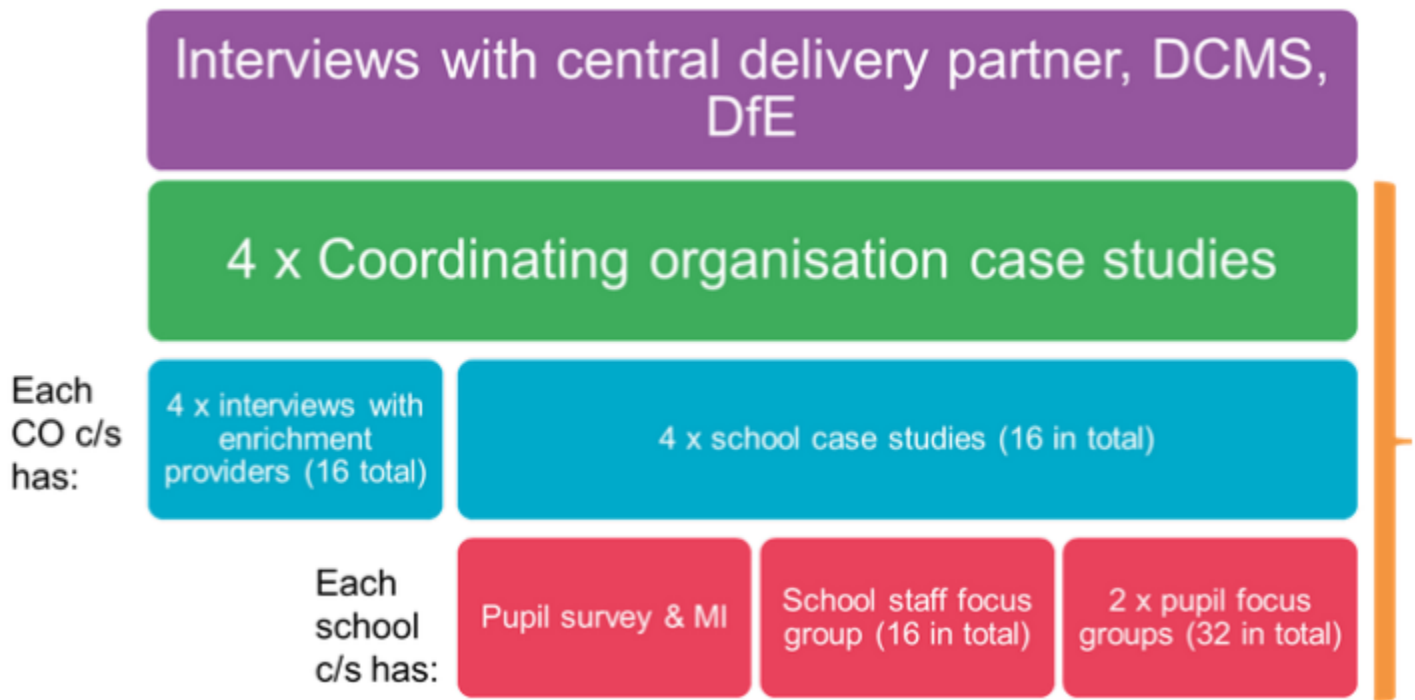
Case studies will be sampled to ensure that the different types of CO (that is, local authorities, multi-academy trusts and charity/voluntary) are represented. The original intention was to situate case studies in each of the 3 regions the EPP is taking place, but due to the rates of sign up to the EPP by COs and schools this approach had to be adjusted. Sampling for the case studies needed to take place in March 2024 due

to the reporting deadlines. However, at this point only 1 area had enough schools recruited to make case study recruitment viable. Consequently, case study COs were sampled from this region ensuring that each type of CO was represented. Each of the 4 selected CO was asked to invite all of their recruited schools. If these COs are unable or unwilling to be case studies then other COs will be approached, including those in other areas if school recruitment is sufficiently progressed. The characteristics (such as, school type, location) of the schools that agree to participate in the case studies will be reviewed. If more than 16 schools agree to take part, then maximum variation sampling will be used to ensure that a range of different schools and enrichment providers in each area are involved to capture the diversity of experiences.

The combination of nested case studies and maximum variation sampling has the benefit of maximising efficiency by allowing some of the same people to contribute to both case studies without over-burdening them. This approach also allows us to collect cases that provide a mixture of similarities and differences which are suitable for undertaking qualitative comparative analysis (QCA).

Figure 26: Nested case study design for coordinating organisations and schools

Use zoom on your browser to view.



Interviews with coordinating organisations and enrichment providers

An additional interview with 1 member of staff from the 4 COs selected as case studies will be conducted at the follow up timepoint (so an additional 4 interviews on-top of the interviews with all COs that will be conducted as part of the pilot-wide

evaluation). These interviews will have a particular focus on how factors specific to their local area have influenced their delivery and how the schools and enrichment providers also taking part in the case study have responded to the EPP.

An interview will also be undertaken with one member of staff from each of the enrichment providers selected to be part of the case studies at the follow-up timepoint (total of 16 interviews). These interviews will focus on the implementation of the activities, perceived outcomes, and sustainability of the pilot activities. These interviews will also, where possible, draw out perspectives on the relationships with the schools also taking part in the case studies.

Pupil background information

Pupil background information will be collected from all pupils in Years 7 and 9 in case study schools, as these year groups are the ones who will be invited to participate in the pupil survey. These year groups were selected after identifying which year groups would be present in school and available at both time-points (for example, they were not expected to be taking mock or formal exams during data collection periods or to change schools between academic years) ([see Table 13](#)).

Based on this assessment, Years 7 to 9 at baseline were concluded to be the most viable options. Year 7 and Year 9 were chosen to ensure that both younger and older pupils at the school were represented.

Table 13: Feasibility for each year group to participate in the pupil survey

Year at baseline	Considerations at baseline	Year at follow up	Considerations at follow up	Feasibility
Year 6	Not at secondary school for baseline	Year 7		No
Year 7		Year 8		Yes
Year 8		Year 9		Yes
Year 9		Year 10		Yes
Year 10		Year 11	May be doing mock GCSE exams or exam preparation	?

Year 11	Taking GCSE exams (or equivalent)	Year 12	May have changed schools for sixth form	No
Year 12		Year 13	May be doing mock exams or exam preparation	?
Year 13		N/A	Will have left the school	No

Pupils' names, dates of birth, unique pupil numbers (UPNs), school class, gender, and eligibility for free school meals (FSM) will be collected. Collecting this information means that baseline and follow-up survey responses from the same pupils can be linked, and analysis can be undertaken by sex and FSM status. This information will also enable further analysis to be undertaken by DfE in the future as they will be able to link survey responses with other pupil characteristics or attainment data held in their databases.

Pupil survey

The pupil survey will be conducted with all pupils in Years 7 and 9 who are attending schools selected as case studies in the summer term 2024. To allow us to track any changes, the survey will be repeated with the same pupils in November 2024 (that is when the pupils are in Years 8 and 10). The pupil survey will focus on pupil participation in enrichment activities over the last half-term, barriers and facilitators to participation and tracking changes in the outcomes outlined in the ToC, focusing particularly on wellbeing (sense of school belonging, relationships with adults and peers, and general life satisfaction). Where appropriate, existing wellbeing measures will be drawn upon including the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Tennant et al., 2007), PISA 2018 Assessment and Analytical Framework (OECD, 2019a) and The KIDSCREEN Group (2024). Some contextual questions will also be included in the pupil survey such as time taken to travel to school, mode of transport, and questions about pupil characteristics (for example, ethnicity, self-reported additional learning needs) as previous research shows these factors are likely to influence pupils' likelihood of taking part in the enrichment activities (Donnelly et al., 2019; Sport England, 2023).

NFER's substantial experience of working with schools indicates that many schools find it more convenient to use paper surveys for pupils. For these reasons, and to ensure that access to technology is not a barrier to participation, schools will be provided with paper surveys. All pupil surveys will be pre-populated with pupil details using the pupil background data to limit the administration activities for schools and

to facilitate matching of baseline and follow up responses. NFER will also arrange for the surveys to be dropped off and collected by a secure courier to aid the response rate.

Focus groups with pupils

NFER researchers will visit schools to conduct 2 focus groups with 6 to 8 pupils per case study school. These focus groups will explore how pupils responded to the enrichment activities, any differences they feel the activities have made for them and what 'good' enrichment activities look like from their perspective. To support participation and facilitate discussion, these focus groups will be conducted in-person and draw upon creative methods (including drawing, collage and ranking/sorting tasks). To maximise coverage of enrichment participation, focus group pupils can be selected from any year group participating in the EPP. For example, if a specific year group(s) is targeted for the enrichment activities as part of the EPP then selection for the pupil focus groups will focus on this year group even if this is outside of Year 7 or Year 9. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of some of the topics covered, guidance about the selection of pupils will be provided and the research team will work closely with the case study schools to select pupils to participate and ensure that the pupils feel comfortable participating in the group with each other (for example, participants could be sampled in friendship groups). In addition, 2 NFER staff members will be present for the focus groups to ensure pupils can get appropriate support if any wellbeing or safeguarding concerns arise.

The focus groups will take around 45 minutes and will be audio recorded with participants' permission.

Focus groups with school staff

In each case study school, one focus group will be conducted with up to 6 school staff including the EPP lead, a member of the school's senior leadership team and, if possible, teachers involved and not involved in delivering enrichment activities at school. The aim is to understand schools' views about the pilot and the enrichment activities offered, barriers and facilitators to participation in enrichment activities (for them as individual staff members, for schools, and pupils and pupils' families), perceived outcomes and views about the sustainability of the partnership approach used in the pilot. These focus groups will take place in-person on the same days as the pupil focus groups.

Appendix B: Full evaluation methods

B.1 Evaluation approach and design process

The evaluation took a mixed methods approach to offer both breadth and depth of insights. A key aim of the EPP delivery was to use codesign with schools, enrichment providers and pupils to inform the local enrichment offer. To carry this ethos of codesign into the evaluation, the following activities were undertaken during the evaluation design process to gain input from key stakeholders.

Theory of change workshops: to develop and refine the EPP theory of change (ToC) 2 interactive workshops were held with key stakeholders from DCMS, DfE, NCST and DofE. The key aims of these workshops were to agree a shared vision and understanding of the EPP's goals and consider the mechanisms by which these goals would be achieved. The ToC created from these workshops and used to guide the evaluation is shown in Figure 1.

Evaluation plan workshops: a total of 5 workshops were held to help inform the evaluation plan and the design of the data collection instruments. These workshops focused on understanding the needs and requirements for the evaluation from the perspective of different stakeholders, testing ideas and getting feedback on proposed data collection methods, and considering the logistics of the data collection activities and how best to implement them. The workshops were held with the following groups of stakeholders:

- 2 workshops with key stakeholders from DCMS, DfE, DofE and NCST
- 2 workshops with COs
- 1 workshop with staff members from 4 schools participating in the EPP

More information about the set up and design process for the evaluation is outlined below.

B.2.Theory of change

The theory of change (ToC) workshops provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss and come to a shared understanding of key elements of the project including the vision, target population and outcomes. Key learning from these workshops is described below and set out in the working ToC for the pilot (Figure 1).

Defining enrichment

The first task in the ToC workshop was to agree a shared understanding of what was meant by 'enrichment'. It was agreed within the group that there were 2 key elements which were important for defining enrichment. Firstly, enrichment had to be in addition to the regular school curriculum. This means a music lesson delivered as part of the school curriculum would not count as enrichment, but attending a band or orchestra at lunchtime would. Secondly, pupils had to have a choice as to whether they participated in the activity or what activity to participate in. This means that activities offered as part of an enrichment afternoon (or similar) at school, where pupils had a choice about what activity they participated in were included in the definition of enrichment applied in this pilot. These enrichment activities encompassed both activities delivered on school premises and activities delivered outside of school which pupils may have been sign-posted to by the school.

Project vision

A key goal of the first ToC workshop was to agree a shared understanding of the problem the pilot aimed to address, and what it hoped to achieve. There was a clear consensus from attendees that access to and uptake of enrichment opportunities among secondary school pupils varied widely. It was also acknowledged that pupils living in disadvantaged areas generally had fewer opportunities to participate in enrichment activities and may experience additional barriers to participation. Consequently, the goal of the pilot was defined as improving access to, and uptake of, enrichment activities for all participating secondary school pupils, with a focus on increasing participation in enrichment activities for pupils who do not currently take part in any activities. However, to do this, it was recognised that the enrichment activities offered needed to match pupils' needs and interests. Using youth voice to codesign the enrichment offers was therefore felt to be an important element of the pilot.

Alongside this, it was recognised that socio-economically disadvantaged pupils may be more likely to take part in school-based enrichment activities (that is activities run on school premises) than enrichment activities outside of school. At the same time, it was acknowledged that there are limited resources and capacity within schools to be able to deliver these activities. Stakeholders were therefore keen to ensure that the pilot did not increase the burden on school staff. It was hoped that the centralised model of coordinating local enrichment activities being tested in the pilot would enable the variety of enrichment activities available to pupils to increase without increasing the burden on schools.

Target groups

Three key target population groups of the pilot were identified through the ToC workshops and are therefore represented on the ToC:

- COs
- schools and enrichment providers
- pupils

The activities and outcomes identified for these 3 groups are interlinked and assume that the benefits of input from the COs lead to benefits for the other target groups.

As described in [Chapter 1](#), 2 joint delivery partners DofE and NCST were appointed work with DCMS and DfE. Their primary role was to identify and recruit COs in the 3 regions of England (North East, North West and East of England) which were the focus for the EPP and support them throughout the pilot. In total, 17 COs were appointed by DofE and NCST to develop and coordinate the local enrichment offers. These COs were supported by DofE and NCST throughout the project via 1-to-1 meetings. DofE and NCST also organised collaboration opportunities throughout the EPP where COs could come together and share learning.

B.3. Pilot-wide data collection

The pilot-wide data collection activities took place across all organisations participating in the EPP to enable us to gather a breadth of insights from across the whole programme.

Monitoring information (MI) - schools

- To explore any changes in school-run enrichment provision and participation during the pilot, all schools participating in the EPP were asked to complete a template of school-level monitoring information (MI) at baseline and follow-up. School-run enrichment provision included enrichment activities run by school staff and visiting peripatetic staff (individual teachers working in more than one school such as an instrumental teacher running a band or orchestra) on or off school premises. It did not include activities run by external enrichment providers on school premises.

To minimise the burden on schools the data collected was a snapshot of the last complete week at school where activities were delivered. The data included:

- how many and what type of enrichment activities were run that week
- when the enrichment activities took place (for example after school)
- the number of pupils who participated in the enrichment activities in each year

group

In total, 67 responses (40%, N = 166) were received at baseline and 66 responses (43%, N = 155) at follow-up. The initial plan was to match this data with NFER’s Register of Schools (with data drawn from [Get Information about Schools](#)) to allow analysis of enrichment provision based on school characteristics. However, the relatively small sample sizes meant that this was not possible this due to issues with small cell counts that mean the data is not likely to be reliable or meaningful and is also more likely to result in disclosive data (see ONS [Disclosure Control](#) for more details). Overall, it is worth noting that in addition to low response rates, the school MI (and enrichment provider MI, see below) had a lot of incomplete data. In some cases this was because schools did not collect the data requested, or because the staff member completing the template only had knowledge of some of the data. Results reported based on the MI should therefore be interpreted with caution.

At baseline, this data was matched with the average weekly whole school attendance data (as a percentage) from the autumn and spring terms of the 2023 to 2024 academic year published by DfE. At follow-up schools were asked to provide attendance data from the last complete week they delivered enrichment activities in the MI template^{[\[footnote 19\]](#)}.

Online survey with schools

The EPP lead contact at each participating school was asked to complete an online survey at both baseline and follow-up. To enable changes to be tracked over time, the survey asked about schools’ approaches to delivering enrichment activities, the extent to which they worked with local enrichment providers, their views about local enrichment opportunities available, and barriers and facilitators to participation in enrichment activities for schools and pupils at both timepoints. At follow-up, questions also asked about their views about programme sustainability and their perceived outcomes for pupils.

Surveys were administered using Questback software. A total of 107 responses (64%, N = 166) were received at baseline and 112 responses (72%, N = 155^{[\[footnote 20\]](#)}) at follow-up. [Table 14](#) shows the characteristics of schools who completed the survey at baseline and follow-up.

Table 14: Characteristics of schools who completed the school survey at baseline and follow up

School characteristic	All participating schools N (%)	Baseline responders N (%)	Follow-up responders N (%)
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**Establishment
type**

Academies	140 (85.9 %)	90 (84.1 %)	93 (83.0 %)
Free schools	6 (3.7 %)	4 (3.7 %)	5 (4.5 %)
Local authority maintained	17 (10.4 %)	13 (12.1 %)	14 (12.5 %)

FSM quintile*

Lowest 20%	5 (3.1 %)	5 (4.7 %)	2 (1.8 %)
2nd Lowest 20%	15 (9.2 %)	12 (11.2 %)	13 (11.6 %)
Middle 20%	37 (22.7 %)	20 (18.7 %)	24 (21.4 %)
2nd Highest 20%	40 (24.5 %)	22 (20.6 %)	25 (22.3 %)
Highest 20%	62 (38.0 %)	45 (42.1 %)	45 (40.2 %)
Missing	4 (2.5 %)	3 (2.8 %)	3 (2.7 %)

SEN quintile*

Lowest 20%	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0 %)	0 (0.0 %)
2nd Lowest 20%	27 (16.6 %)	20 (18.7 %)	18 (16.1 %)
Middle 20%	44 (27 %)	27 (25.2 %)	31 (27.7 %)
2nd Highest 20%	56 (34.4 %)	32 (29.9 %)	35 (31.2 %)
Highest 20%	36 (22.1 %)	28 (26.2 %)	28 (25.0 %)

**Attainment 8
quintile***

Lowest 20%	51 (31.3 %)	33 (30.8 %)	37 (33.0 %)
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2nd Lowest 20%	35 (21.5 %)	24 (22.4 %)	24 (21.4 %)
Middle 20%	39 (23.9 %)	22 (20.6 %)	29 (25.9 %)
2nd Highest 20%	25 (15.3 %)	19 (17.8 %)	15 (13.4 %)
Highest 20%	9 (5.5 %)	6 (5.6 %)	5 (4.5 %)
Missing	4 (2.5 %)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Ofsted rating			
Inadequate	12 (7.4 %)	9 (8.4 %)	10 (8.9 %)
Requires Improvement	29 (17.8 %)	18 (16.8 %)	23 (20.5 %)
Good	111 (68.1 %)	71 (66.4 %)	72 (64.3 %)
Outstanding	10 (6.1 %)	8 (7.5 %)	6 (5.4 %)
Missing	1 (0.6 %)	1 (0.9 %)	1 (0.9 %)
Region			
East of England	52 (31.9 %)	31 (29.0%)	29 (25.9%)
North East	54 (33.1 %)	34 (31.8%)	42 (37.5%)
North West	57 (35.0 %)	42 (39.3%)	41 (36.6%)
Rural or urban			
Rural	25 (15.3 %)	17 (15.9 %)	15 (13.4 %)
Urban	138 (84.7 %)	90 (84.1 %)	97 (86.6 %)
Total	163 (100.0 %)	107 (100.0 %)	112 (100.0 %)

*Quintiles calculated amongst secondary schools in England.

Monitoring information (MI) - enrichment providers

To explore changes in enrichment activities run by external organisations (that is, not schools, and here referred to as ‘enrichment providers’) that pupils accessed via, or were sign-posted to by schools, MI was collected from the enrichment providers who participated in the EPP^{[\[footnote 21\]](#)}. This data focused on the enrichment activities these organisations ran in schools participating in the EPP or activities pupils attending participating schools could access outside of school. As with the school MI, snapshot data was collected at baseline and at follow-up for the last complete week they delivered activities including:

- how many and what type(s) of enrichment activities were run that week
- when the enrichment activities take place (such as, after school)
- and the number of pupils participating in the enrichment activities in each year group

Due to delivery delays, it was not possible to collect baseline data in June and July 2024 as enrichment providers were still being recruited to the programme over the school summer holidays (July and August 2024). Instead, enrichment providers were asked to retrospectively provide this data from summer term in the academic year 2023 to 2024 in November 2024. Although this created additional limitations in terms of record keeping and accuracy, this meant that data could be requested from the most complete set of enrichment providers available.

A total of 83 responses (35%, N = 232) were received from enrichment providers at baseline and 36 responses (14%, N = 255) were received at follow-up. There was also a lot of missing data.

Online survey with enrichment providers

The lead contact from each enrichment provider was invited to complete a follow-up survey on behalf of their organisation. This survey focused on the implementation of the EPP, including the types of enrichment activities delivered, views about any factors which helped or hindered the success of the pilot, perceived outcomes for enrichment providers, schools and pupils, and views about the sustainability.

Surveys were administered using Questback software. While 78 (31%, N = 255) responses were received this response rate was also lower than expected. However, this may in part be related to the role of enrichment providers in the pilot and how they were signed up, as not all the enrichment providers reported as being involved in the EPP completed any delivery.

Interviews with coordinating organisations

One member of staff from each of the 17 COs was invited to participate in an online

interview at both baseline and follow up on behalf of their organisation. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes.

Baseline interviews (conducted in June and July 2024) focused on the set-up phase of the project including how they became involved in the pilot. Questions included their views about the application process, how the codesign process worked and who was involved, and how local organisations responded to and engaged with the pilot. These interviews also explored factors they felt would support or hinder the success of the pilot in the delivery phase.

Follow-up interviews (conducted in March and April 2025) focused on the implementation of the EPP including what has worked well and any challenges, perceived outcomes, programme sustainability, and future plans. All COs participated in an interview at each timepoint.

Key stakeholder interviews

Three online paired interviews were conducted with staff members from each key stakeholder organisation (DCMS, DfE, DofE, NCST) at baseline and follow-up. Note that for one organisation an interview rather than a paired interview was conducted at follow-up due to staff availability. Interviewees were selected based on their ability to provide insights into the programme delivery. Baseline interviews focused on the set-up phase of the pilot including how it was conceived, the vision for the pilot, what worked well and any challenges during the set-up phase, programme responsiveness, and factors which were felt support or hinder the success of the pilot going forwards. Follow-up interviews focused on the implementation of the EPP, perceived outcomes and views about programme sustainability.

B.4. Case study data collection approach

To gather more in-depth insights into how the pilot has been delivered, the original plan was to use a ‘nested’ case study design based around 16 case study schools recruited from 4 COs with differing approaches to the pilot (for more information on the original design [see Appendix A](#)). However, this approach to recruitment was not successful due to the delays with school recruitment to the pilot, which was on-going in March and April 2024, and with subsequent data sharing.

Consequently, all schools that COs had recruited by May 2024 (N = 198) were invited to participate in the evaluation as a case study. Thirty schools expressed interest in becoming a case study school and from these we were able to select 16 case study schools.

The sample was selected in order to:

- keep the nested design as far as possible (that is having some schools which were partnered with the same COs)
- ensure each pilot region (North West, North East and East of England) was represented
- represent different types of COs (MATs, LA and voluntary sector organisations) [\[footnote 22\]](#) and enrichment approaches
- cover a range of locations (urban, rural, coastal)
- explore the different geographic spreads of schools that COs are working with in each area (for example, some are working with schools that are all located close together, while others are working with schools spread across a much wider area)

Each school case study contained the following elements:

- pupil survey with pupils in Years 7 and 9 at baseline, who became Years 8 and 10 at follow-up
- pupil background data (follow-up only [\[footnote 23\]](#))
- 2 pupil focus groups (follow-up only)
- staff focus group (follow-up only)
- interview with one of the enrichment providers working with the school, if applicable (follow-up only)

More information about each of these methods is provided in turn in the rest of this appendix.

Pupil survey

The pupil survey was conducted with all pupils in Years 7 and 9 who were attending case study schools in the summer term 2024. The survey was repeated with the same cohorts of pupils in March and April 2025 (when they were in Years 8 and 10) to allow change to be tracked over time. These year groups were selected on the basis that they would be present in schools and available to complete the pupil surveys at both the baseline and follow-up time-points. This means that they were not likely to be taking mock or formal exams at either data collection time-point, nor were they likely to change schools. It also meant that both younger and older year groups within the schools were represented.

Delays with school on-boarding and data sharing and the knock-on impact this had on case study recruitment meant that baseline surveys were anonymous. However,

endpoint surveys were pre-populated with the pupil background information.

The pupil survey focused on pupils' participation in enrichment activities over the last half-term, barriers and facilitators to participation, and aimed to track changes in the outcomes outlined in the ToC, focusing particularly on wellbeing (sense of school belonging, relationships with adults and peers, and general life satisfaction). Existing measures including the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Tennant et al., 2007), Programme for International Student Assessment PISA wellbeing framework (2019) and The KIDSCREEN Group (2024) were drawn upon to inform the survey design. Some contextual questions were also included in the pupil survey such as time taken to travel to school, mode of transport, and questions about pupil characteristics (such as, ethnicity, self-reported additional learning needs) as previous research has suggested that these factors are likely to influence pupils' likelihood of taking part in the enrichment activities (for example, Donnelly et al., 2019; Sport England, 2023).

Surveys were completed on paper to ensure access to technology was not a barrier to participation. At baseline 3,923 (59%) pupil responses were received from across 14 case study schools, and at follow-up 4,177 (79%) pupil responses from 13 case study schools. The 2 schools that did not return pupil surveys at baseline withdrew from being case studies, so were not included in subsequent case study activities.

Pupil background information

The initial plan was to collect background data for all pupils in case study schools who were in Years 7 and 9 at baseline. The original plan was to collect pupils' names, dates of birth, unique pupil numbers (UPNs), school class, sex, and eligibility for free school meals (FSM) prior to the baseline data collection. This was to allow the pupil surveys to be pre-populated so that analysis to be undertaken by sex and FSM status and to allow data linking for future analysis to be undertaken by DfE. However, delays to school on-boarding and data sharing meant this was not possible. Instead, this data was collected in the Autumn of 2024 to allow us to pre-populate the follow-up pupil surveys. This meant that analysis could still be undertaken by sex and FSM status at the follow-up time-point. However, it meant it was not possible link the pupil surveys on a 1-to-1 basis between the 2 timepoints which meant the analysis was limited to descriptive statistics.

Focus groups with pupils

NFER researchers visited the 13 case study schools which remained at the follow-up timepoint (February to March 2025). The aim was to conduct 2 focus groups with 6 to 8 pupils per school, although 3 schools were only able to provide one pupil focus group. Schools were asked to select pupils to participate in the focus groups on the basis that those pupils had been involved in a new enrichment activity as part

of the EPP, so pupils could be selected from any year group (that is, they did not have to be from the year groups completing the pupil surveys). In total, the focus groups involved 142 pupils.

The focus groups explored how pupils responded to the enrichment activities, any differences they felt the activities have made for them and what 'good' enrichment activities look like from their perspective. Post-it notes and collage activities were used to facilitate discussion and support participation.

Each focus group lasted for around 45 minutes and was audio recorded.

Interviews or focus groups with school staff

Each case study involved an interview, paired interview or focus group with school staff including the EPP lead, and other school staff members involved in delivering enrichment activities at the school or a member of the school's senior leadership team (subject to staff availability). In one school it was not possible to interview the EPP lead due to staff illness. In total 25 school staff members took part.

These interviews and focus groups aimed to understand schools' views about the pilot and the enrichment activities offered, barriers and facilitators to participation in enrichment activities (for them as individual staff members, for schools, and pupils), perceived outcomes and views about the sustainability of the partnership approach used in the pilot.

These focus groups lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and took place in-person on the same days as the pupil focus groups.

Interviews with enrichment providers

Each of the case study schools was asked to identify an external enrichment provider they were working with as part of the EPP to participate in an interview. However, only 6 of the case study schools were working with external enrichment providers as part of the EPP. Some interviews with enrichment providers were conducted in-person as part of the school case study visits ($N < 5$). For the remaining schools, enrichment provider interviews were organised online after the case study visit to support participation. However, despite these interviews being booked, the enrichment providers were unable to attend due to issues arising within their own organisations and it was not possible to arrange a new date with them.

These interviews focused on the implementation of the activities, perceived outcomes, and sustainability of the pilot activities, as well as, where possible, drawing out perspectives on the relationships with the case study schools.

B.5. Quantitative analysis

The quantitative data collected in this project was analysed following the steps set out below.

B.5.1. Data cleaning and collation

Firstly, data from the surveys and MI templates was collated and cleaned by NFER's Data Management Unit. Pupil background data collected from case study schools was then used to pre-populate the follow-up surveys with pupil details. This data was also used to provide a breakdown of follow-up pupil survey responses by sex and FSM eligibility.

B.5.2. Statistical analysis

To provide summary characteristics about the enrichment activities delivered during the pilot (research question 2^{[\[footnote 24\]](#)}) and the pupils who participated in them (research question 4^{[\[footnote 25\]](#)}) MI and pupil survey data (regarding enrichment participation) were analysed using descriptive statistics. This included frequency counts and calculation of the ranges, medians and means.

The plan was to undertake cross-tabulations of the school survey data by CO type and region to explore any differences in the types of activities offered and levels of participation. However, small counts ($N \leq 5$) across various response options when the whole sample was included meant it was not possible to do these cross-tabulations because too much of the data would have resulted in very small cell counts that were unlikely to be meaningful and there is also the increased risk of data being disclosive. However, the representativeness of schools who participated in the school survey was checked by summarising and comparing the characteristics of participating and non-participating schools in each region^{[\[footnote 26\]](#)}. Results showed that non-response bias was not an issue ([see Table 14](#) for a characteristics of all schools who participated in the EPP and the characteristics of schools who completed the baseline and follow-up surveys).

Data from the pupil, school staff and enrichment provider surveys was analysed using descriptive statistics. Survey responses presented in the form of a Likert scale were analysed by calculating the proportions of respondents who selected each option. As the baseline pupil surveys were anonymous, it was not possible to link the baseline and follow up surveys on a one-to-one basis between the timepoints despite the same pupils being invited to take part in the survey at both time-points. This meant the analysis was restricted to descriptive analysis of aggregated responses at both time-points to provide some indication as to whether there were any changes over time.

The pupil survey contained questions designed to operationalise concepts such as school belonging that can be difficult to measure from a single question. The pupil survey was thus designed so that questions could be combined to create a composite measure of school belonging. This was done by summing 7 Likert scale responses (each converted into the numbers 1 to 5), measuring the level of agreement with statements about school belonging. To confirm that the items within these composite measures were measuring the same underlying construct confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used at baseline.

Some model fit statistics from the CFA for the 7-item belonging scale fell short of the values commonly deemed acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 2009). Two further CFA models were calculated, each of which removed one relatively poorly performing item from the scale (poor in terms of factor loadings). The model that removed the item “I feel connected to the adults at my school” showed an improvement across all model fit statistics. However, on balance it was decided that the role of staff was an important aspect of school belonging, so the item was retained on theoretical grounds. Details of the confirmatory factor analysis are provided in Appendix C.

It is important to note that pupils eligible for FSM, pupils with SEND, and those living in more rural areas may experience additional and/or different barriers to participation in enrichment activities. FSM eligibility was collected as part of the pupil background data and linked to the follow-up pupil survey data to explore differences in responses between FSM and non-FSM pupils. A limited number of hypothesis-driven cross-tabulations for specific pupil survey questions according to responses to the self-reported contextual questions (currently receiving additional support for SEND, length of time taken to travel to school and ethnicity) and FSM eligibility were also undertaken.

Data analysis was undertaken using the R statistical package. All statistical code and outputs were quality assured by a Senior Statistician from our Centre for Statistics.

B.6. Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data collection consisted of pilot-wide interviews with COs, focus groups and interviews undertaken as part of the case studies, and paired interviews with representatives from DofE, NCST, DCMS and DfE. This qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis undertaken in the qualitative analysis package MAXQDA. The qualitative analysis approach for both baseline and follow-up data is outlined below.

Step 1

Create a deductive coding framework in MAXQDA based on the research questions and the programme's ToC to allow us to consolidate the interview and focus group data.

Step 2

Initial deductive coding of the interview and focus group data based on the coding framework. Some inductive coding was also used to capture any unexpected/unintended elements or outcomes, which resulted in some additional codes being added.

Step 3

Further round of inductive thematic coding within the framework and comparisons by participant type (for example, school staff, pupils, local delivery providers). This consisted of a more detailed level of coding to explore key themes within each research question, followed by a higher level of coding to reduce the data down to key over-arching themes within each research question. Differences between participant types (such as school staff and pupils) were also considered.

Results were then grouped thematically within each research question and are reported by research question or sub-research question. Quotations are attributed to broad participant groups to reduce the potential to identify individual participants. This means that quotations from interviews with DCMS and DfE, NCST and DofE are attributed to 'stakeholders'.

B.7. Integrating qualitative and quantitative data

The qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were designed simultaneously to ensure the insights they offer complement one another and to avoid gaps in the data collection. Each survey question was mapped to the research questions. The key themes from the qualitative data were then consolidated with the survey responses, so the different insights these approaches offer could be compared and a judgement made as to whether they pointed towards consistent or diverging conclusions for each research question.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) was undertaken using fsQCA software to explore how different combinations of factors or conditions might lead to a successful outcome within a complex systems change approach. A binary (crisp) QCA approach was used with each case study school being a 'case'. This meant that the 'outcome' and each 'factor' identified as potentially being important for the

outcome of interest were coded as being present (1) or absent (0). Based on the ToC (see Figure 1), the key outcome of interest was defined as an increase in the overall number of pupils participating in enrichment activities. This outcome was scored based on responses to the follow-up school survey question about how the overall number of pupils participating in enrichment activities changed over the course of the pilot. This data was then cross-checked with the school staff interview data from each case study school^[footnote 27]. For almost all case study schools these two data sources pointed to consistent conclusions. Where this was not the case, this was discussed among the NFER research team and additional contextual information was used to decide whether the outcome had been achieved and if this was linked to the pilot activities.

Potential factors that were important for achieving a successful outcome were defined based on the thematic analysis already conducted on the interviews. The data sources that could be used to determine if a factor was present or absent for each case study were then considered. This approach was expected to be iterative, so factors selected were logged for transparency of the analysis.

Appendix C: Confirmatory factor analysis

[Table 15](#) below shows the items that comprise the school belonging scale from the pupil survey. These items were the same at baseline and endpoint, but the confirmatory factor analysis below was only performed on the baseline data. The overarching question was “to what extent do you agree with the following statements about your school?”. Each response was measured on a Likert scale with the values ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘neutral’, ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’, as well as ‘I’m not sure’ and ‘I don’t want to say’.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to calculate a model (Model 1) in which all 7 items loaded onto 1 underlying factor. Model 1 therefore represents the scale as it was actually used, to compare school belonging at baseline and endpoint. Likert responses were treated as numeric (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, etc.) for the purpose of the factor analysis, with item 5 being reverse-coded due to its negative phrasing. Pupils with a missing response for any items were not included in modelling, with responses ‘I’m not sure’ and ‘I don’t want to say’ treated as missing for this purpose. It can be seen in [Table 15](#) that items 2 and 5 have noticeably lower factor loadings than other items, making them possible candidates for removal from

the scale.

Table 15: Items that comprise the school belonging scale and their factor loadings from a one-factor confirmatory factor analysis

Item	Item text	Model 1 factor loading
1	I feel that people at my school understand me as a person	0.719
2	I feel connected to the adults at my school	0.440
3	I make friends easily at my school	0.747
4	Other students seem to like me	0.807
5	I feel like an outsider (or left out of things) at school	0.455
6	To what extent do you agree I feel that I matter to others at my school	0.793
7	To what extent do you agree I feel like I belong at my school	0.731

Data source: baseline pupil survey (N = 3,923)

Model 2 was obtained by rerunning Model 1 with item 2 removed from the scale and similarly Model 3 removed item 5 from the scale (but not item 2). [Table 16](#) compares model fit statistics for all 3 models. Acceptable ranges for the CFI, TLI, RMSEA and SRMR are given by Hu and Bentler 1999). Note that the log-likelihood, AIC and BIC cannot be interpreted in isolation (that is there is no 'acceptable' range), they can only be compared between two models.

Table 16: A comparison model fit statistics for 3 confirmatory factor analysis model specifications

Model fit statistic	Interpretation of model fit statistic	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Log-likelihood	Higher is better	-19803.5	-17460.9	-17400.1

AIC	Lower is better	39634.9	34945.9	34824.1
BIC	Lower is better	39714.2	35014.3	34892.5
CFI	>0.95 is acceptable	0.915	0.957	0.919
TLI	>0.95 is acceptable	0.872	0.928	0.865
RMSEA	<0.06 is acceptable	0.133	0.111	0.155
SRMR	<0.08 is acceptable	0.055	0.033	0.055
Number of observations	2125	2217	2206	

AIC=Akaike Information Criterion; BIC=Bayesian Information Criterion;
CF=Comparative Fit Index; TLI=Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR=Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

Data source: baseline pupil survey (N = 3,923)

Appendix D: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

The thematic analysis initially identified the following 6 factors as potentially important for achieving a successful outcome (that is increased pupil participation in enrichment activities):

- funding being provided to schools as part of the pilot
- good relationship between the school and the CO
- activities offered were responsive to pupil voice
- at least some new enrichment activities were offered during the school day
- at least some new enrichment activities were offered on school premises
- school used external enrichment providers as part of the pilot

The school staff interview data was then used to code whether each factor was present or absent within each case study school. Results showed that 2 of the

factors (schools offering at least some new enrichment activities during the school day and schools offering at least some new activities on school premises) exactly overlapped. These 2 factors were therefore combined to leave the following 5 factors for analysis:

- funding being provided to schools as part of the pilot
- good relationship between the school and the CO
- activities offered were responsible to pupil voice
- at least some new enrichment activities were offered during the school day and on school premises
- school used external enrichment providers as part of the pilot

This resulted in the truth table shown in [Table 17](#). Where the raw consistency score among cases was above 0.5, the outcome (increased pupil participation) was coded as successful (1). Where the consistency score among cases was 0.5 or lower, the outcomes was coded as unsuccessful (0). Outcome coding was based on responses to the school survey, which were cross-checked with the school staff interview data for each case study school.

Table 17: Truth table for QCA analysis

Funding given to schools	Good relationship with CO	Activities informed by pupil voice	Activities delivered in school day/ on school premises	Used External Providers	Number of cases	Outcomes Increased pupil participation
0	1	1	1	1	3	1
0	0	0	0	0	2	0
0	1	0	1	0	2	0
1	0	0	0	0	1	1
1	1	0	0	0	1	0
1	0	1	1	0	1	1
0	1	0	1	1	1	0

1	1	0	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Data source: fsQCA analysis based on school survey and interview data. N = 13 case study schools

Note: 1 = present, 0 = not present

Results of the complex QCA solution ([see Table 18](#)) revealed that the causal ‘recipes for success’ were:

- schools being given funding, having a good relationship with their CO, offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, and using external providers
- schools having a good relationship with their CO, using pupil voice to inform activities, offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, and using external providers
- schools being given funding, but not having a good relationship with the CO, not offering new activities during the school day and on school premises and not using external providers
- schools being given funding, offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, and using external providers

Overall, this solution accounted for 86% of cases and had a consistency of 86%.

Table 18: Complex QCA solution

Solutions

Funding*GoodCORelationship*SchoolDaySchoolPremises*ExternalProviders

GoodCORelationship*PupilVoiceUsed*SchoolDaySchoolPremises*ExternalProvider

Funding*~GoodCORelationship*~PupilVoiceUsed*~SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~E

Funding*~GoodCORelationship*PupilVoiceUsed*SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~Exte

Data source: fsQCA analysis. Note that ~ means 'not' and * means 'and'

The parsimonious solution ([Table 19](#)) which provides the most simplified solution possible also revealed 4 'causal recipes', which were as follows:

- using pupil voice to inform activities
- schools being given funding but without a good relationship with the CO
- schools being given funding and offering new activities during the school day and on school premises
- schools being given funding and working with external enrichment providers

Table 19: Parsimonious QCA solution

Solutions	Raw coverage	Unique coverage	Consistency
Pupil voice used	0.57	0.29	0.8
Funding*~GoodCORelationship	0.29	0.14	1
Funding*SchoolDaySchoolPremises	0.43	0	1
Funding*ExternalProviders	0.29	0	1

Data source: fsQCA analysis. Note that ~ means 'not' and * means 'and'

There were some inconsistencies in both these solutions. Consequently, the cases that appeared to be driving these inconsistencies were revisited. Both these cases were schools that we had previously discussed by the research team due to uncertainties about whether the outcome had been achieved due to conflicting survey and interview data. Consequently, these schools were removed from the analysis and then the analysis was re-run.

The complex solution ([Table 20](#)) for this revised analysis resulted in 4 causal recipes:

- having a good relationship with the CO and offering new activities during the school day on school but not using pupil voice nor external enrichment providers
- schools having a good relationship with their CO, using pupil voice to inform activities, offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, and using external enrichment providers

- schools being given funding but not having a good relationship with CO, not using pupil voice, not offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, and not using external enrichment providers
- schools being given funding, using pupil voice, offering new activities during the school day and on school premises, but not having a good relationship with the CO nor using external providers

This time these solutions accounted for 100% of cases and had a consistency of 100%.

Table 20: Revised complex solutions

Solutions

GoodCORelationship*~PupilVoiceUsed*SchoolDaySchoolPemises*~ExternalProvid

GoodCORelationship*PupilVoiceUsed*SchoolDaySchool Premises*ExternalProvide

Funding*~GoodCORelationship*~PupilVoiceUsed*~
SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~ExternalProviders

Funding*~GoodCORelationship*PupilVoiceUsed*SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~Exte

Data source: fsQCA analysis. Note that ~ means ‘not’ and * means ‘and’

Meanwhile the parsimonious solution (the most simplified version) for this analysis identified 3 casual recipes ([Table 21](#)) as follows:

- using pupil voice to inform activities
- schools being given funding but without a good relationship with the CO
- school offering new activities during the school day and on school premises but not using external enrichment providers

These solutions accounted for 100% of cases and had a consistency of 100%.

Table 21: Parsimonious solutions from QCA analysis

Solutions	Raw coverage	Unique coverage	Consistency
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Pupil voice used	0.57	0.43	1
Funding*~GoodCORelationship	0.29	0.14	1
SchoolDaySchoolPremises*~ExternalProviders	0.43	0.29	1

Data source: fsQCA analysis. Note that ~ means 'not' and * means 'and'

1. Note that some COs recruited more than 10 schools, while others recruited less. [↵](#)
2. A systems-change partnership model involves different organisations working together in partnership to change the way a local system operates. See also [Renaissi System Change Guide](#) for more information about systems-change approaches [↵](#)
3. There are 55 EIAs comprising the third of local authorities in England with the lowest sustained educational performance across key stage 2 and key stage 4 from 2017 to 2019 ([GOV.UK](#)). [↵](#)
4. Note that this figure is lower than at baseline due to attrition. [↵](#)
5. Note this may not capture all enrichment providers schools are working with, as data was only collected from enrichment providers participating in the EPP. [↵](#)
6. Note this data was initially planned to be collected at baseline to allow responses of individual pupils to be linked on a one-to-one, tracked over time. However, delays with delivery had a knock-on impact on case study school recruitment which meant this was not possible ([see Appendix B](#) for more details). [↵](#)
7. Note additional interviews were organised but cancelled by the enrichment providers last-minute and it was not possible to re-arrange. [↵](#)
8. This was to ensure the data was available in time to complete the analysis for this report. [↵](#)
9. Note that some COs recruited more than 10 schools, while others did not manage to meet the target of 10 schools. The total number of schools recruited was 166. [↵](#)
10. Note this includes DCMS, DfE, DofE and NCST [↵](#)
11. Local meetings between the COs in each region NE, NW and EofE to discuss the pilot and what was working well and any challenges they were experiencing. [↵](#)
12. All COs were invited to join these meetings to reflect on their experiences of the

EPP and consider learning for future projects. ↵

13. Percentages reflect the proportion of schools offering a given type of activity at a specific time of day. Because types of activities could be offered at more than one time, these percentages do not sum to 100%. Comparisons highlight relative prevalence rather than mutually exclusive delivery. ↵
14. Although there were some exceptions where the proportion of schools offering the activities remained stable such as performing arts and careers, personal development, and life skills. ↵
15. Note that the analysis was restricted to descriptive statistics, so it is not possible to determine if these differences were statistically significant. ↵
16. Note schools were asked to select pupils to participate in the focus groups on the basis that they had taken up a new enrichment activity as part of the EPP that year. Although some of the pupils had not taken up a new activity, all were participating in at least one enrichment activity, meaning that the data will not be representative of all pupils – especially those not taking part in any activities. ↵
17. Note that responses were also similar between pupils who did and did not report that yesterday was a typical day, so only pupils who responded that yesterday was a typical day are included here. ↵
18. Note: this percentage is higher than the percentage of enrichment providers who reported working with schools as part of the EPP. It is possible that they already worked with other schools and wanted to continue, or that responses to this question were aspirational and that external providers still wanted to work with schools even if they had not done so during the pilot. ↵
19. This was done to ensure the data was received in time to complete the analysis for this report. ↵
20. Note that this figure is lower than at baseline due to attrition. ↵
21. Note this means this data will not necessarily cover all enrichment providers working with each school, only the enrichment providers working as part of the EPP. ↵
22. Note that LAs are not represented as no schools working with LAs volunteered to be case studies. ↵
23. Note we initially planned to collect this at both baseline and follow-up to enable us to pre-populate the pupil surveys and link the data. However, delays with school on-boarding and data sharing meant this was not possible. ↵
24. Research question 2. What enrichment activities were delivered during the pilot? What were the barriers and facilitators to successful implementation of enrichment

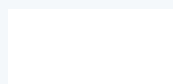
delivery including place-specific factors? [↵](#)

25. Research question 4. How has the pilot changed the enrichment activities available locally (such as, variety, quality, location, increased capacity)? What difference are these changes perceived to have made for enrichment providers, schools, and pupils? How did this vary by place? [↵](#)
26. Note the original plan was to compare the characteristics of schools participating within each area covered by COs. However, due to the overlap between the geographical areas some of the COs are covering, this to was amended to region. [↵](#)
27. As noted above, the school MI data was less complete and while it informed this analysis where possible, greater weight was placed on the survey and interview data, so we used these data sources for the QCA. [↵](#)

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