

Premier League Primary Stars

Evaluation report

Karen McInnes, Jane Carrier, Helen Bown



National Development Team for Inclusion

office@ndti.org.uk

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Summary

The Premier League Primary Stars is a phenomenal programme that is making a **difference to significant numbers of children** across the country through its targeted interventions alongside a myriad of other features and offers designed to meet local needs.

- It is a huge, complex and diverse programme delivered by 105 CCOs, that has grown and evolved over time since its launch in 2016. Responsiveness is a fundamentally important characteristic of the programme, both to external events such as the Covid 19 pandemic, as well as to the unique circumstances of individual schools and communities.
- Children's engagement in learning has improved as a result of the targeted interventions they experience. Their enhanced motivation to learn is clearly linked to their enjoyment of these sessions and they have shown significant improvements in maths and English and reading in particular.
- The flexible and diverse range of PSHE interventions delivered have also increased children's understanding of complex social issues (e.g., racism, disability, equality and inclusion), enabled personal skills development and growth, and facilitated positive changes in behaviour.
- All targeted interventions can be bespoke to some extent, and in the case of PSHE, the definition has become sufficiently elastic to accommodate an enormous range of interventions covering topics from equality and diversity to rail safety. Although targeted interventions cover a very wide range of topics and activities, it is clear that the Premier League values lie at the heart of all that is delivered.



At the heart of these experiences are the **strong relationships that develop between coaches and children, and between coaches and schools**. As a result of these relationships, mutual respect and trust is fostered which brings a number of benefits for CCOs and schools alike.

- CCOs prioritise building positive relationships with schools, which is clearly paying off – our survey found that out of 63 responses from schools, 100% of schools had a good relationship with their CCO.
- Good relationships with schools have several different aspects, including preparing the ground well, agreeing mutual expectations, building relationships at every level, becoming embedded in the school team and sharing information.
- Coaches have a different kind of relationship with children, which relies on an informal working style, understanding children as individuals and enabling children's voices to be heard.
- There is an opportunity to develop relationships with parents further.
- Delivery partnerships with other organisations can involve either delivering **alongside** others, or **on behalf** of others. Partners are consistently positive about the skills and responsiveness of CCO staff.

A small number of **common challenges** are experienced in the organisation and delivery of targeted interventions, and other components of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. Some of these are best addressed at the local level, for example building on the good relationships that exist between CCOs, schools and wider partners. Others would benefit from creative problem solving across CCO's, which we explore further in [section 8.3](#).

- Schools (and sometimes children) can see the role of CCOs as being exclusively about sport and do not appreciate the full scope of what they can offer.
- The capacity of both schools and some CCOs is under pressure, which means that it is harder to build the kind of positive relationship upon which targeted interventions depend, as described in [section 5](#).
- A focus on KPIs can create perverse incentives for CCOs and data collection methods do not reflect the flexibility of the programme.
- There is a danger that CCOs are reinventing wheels, as there are few systematic ways of capturing and sharing learning within the programme.



1. Introduction

This section introduces the Premier League Primary Stars programme, its underpinning values, areas of focus, and coverage. It also explains the approach taken to evaluate the impacts and lessons about what works in enabling children of primary school age to take up, enjoy and benefit from diverse learning opportunities through sport.

1.1 About Premier League Primary Stars

The Premier League Primary Stars programme uses the appeal of the Premier League and professional football clubs to help primary school children be active, enhance their learning and develop essential life skills. The programme has been developed and is managed by the Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF), a Premier League funded charity which aims to create positive and lasting sporting, health and education outcomes for children, young people and the wider community.

The Premier League values underpin everything on offer through the Programme, encouraging children to:

- Be ambitious – work hard and never give up on their goals
- Be inspiring – set a great example to others
- Be connected – work well with others and in a team
- Be fair – treat people equally and think of others

[Source: <https://plprimarystars.com/about>]

The key features and successful components of the Premier League Primary Stars programme are explored further in [section 3](#) of this report.

1.2 About this Evaluation

The Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) commissioned NDTi to undertake a programme evaluation of Premier League Primary Stars, addressing key

questions about impacts including how Club Community Organisations (CCOs) are able to deliver positive outcomes and improve the experiences of children through engagement in specific targeted interventions.

Targeted interventions are programmes of work delivered in schools by CCOs, that are focused on either English, maths or PSHE and delivered to children identified by the school as needing additional support. For further information see [section 4](#).

The evaluation ran for nine months from January to September 2022, providing a summative evaluation and learning exercise to develop the PLCF's understanding of what works for whom, how this has come about and to inform future programme design and delivery. Using the programme's Theory of Change as a starting point (see [Appendix 1](#)), the evaluation focused on:

- Answering a range of evaluation questions concerned with the extent to which the programme's overarching goals and outcomes have been or are being achieved at multiple levels, and the impact on children of specific targeted interventions.
- Involving the network of CCO's, primary schools, and other key partners across England and Wales in exploring these issues and sharing evidence of what works.
- Delivering capacity building workshops for CCO's to ensure a shared approach to understanding evidence and collecting change stories to demonstrate and learn from impacts achieved for a diverse range of children.
- Taking a mixed methods approach to study, analyse and interpret extensive programme data alongside primary data collected through two surveys with CCOs and participating schools, and fieldwork with a sample of six CCOs.
- As part of the outputs, developing a framework and approach for assessing future progress, and continually reflect and learn about what works (which can be found in [Appendix 5](#)).

A five-phase evaluation plan was delivered between January and August 2022, to both take stock and capture the programme wide picture of change including retrospective data from the last five years, alongside current and new insights generated with participating CCOs and schools.

Four capacity building workshops were held to support CCOs to understand and value evidence and learning, and to build evaluation into their activities whilst addressing common areas of concern or interest in further development. These included understanding and embedding light touch, holistic approaches to evidence (using NDTi's five layers of evidence); storytelling and the use of

change stories to evidence impact (one of the five layers); and increasing the voice of young people in understanding what works.

During September, key messages and findings from all the elements of the above work were drawn together and explored in a workshop session with the Premier League Primary Stars Sounding Board established to oversee and guide evaluation activities, comprising leads from the PLCF, the National Literacy Trust, Everfi and representative CCO's.

1.3 Sources of evidence

The findings in this report have been drawn from an analysis of different evidence sources gathered through the following routes:

- Data on the take up, experience and impact of Premier League Primary Stars targeted Interventions in maths, English and PHSE, collected locally by CCOs and aggregated centrally, for the delivery year 2020-21 and first six months of 2021-22.
- NDTi's survey to CCOs (77 responses out of a possible 105, a 73.4% response rate).
- NDTi's survey to schools working with CCOs (63 responses, all from different schools).
- Qualitative data from fieldwork undertaken with six CCOs and their partners, including interviews, group discussions and conversations with: Premier League Primary Stars leads and managers, Premier League Primary Stars coaches, data managers, CCO partners, head and deputy/assistant head teachers and children; and lesson observations (the range of interviews varied between CCOs).
- Change stories and case studies from a range of CCOs (n= 38).
- Seven vignettes: original case studies of different initiatives developed by other CCOs (i.e., not included in our fieldwork sample) in order to deliver targeted interventions.
- Graphic timelines and reflections on the history and evolution of the Premier League Primary Stars programme.



2. History and roots of Premier League Primary Stars

Headlines

- The Premier League Primary Stars programme is rooted in the early community developments of football clubs, and also in a growing focus on education that dates from the 1990's.
- Premier League Primary Stars was launched formally in 2016 and reached its initial three-year target of reaching 10,000 schools within the first year, enabling it to extend its focus and to concentrate on achieving outcomes.
- CCOs responded rapidly and flexibly to the Covid-19 pandemic, which raised the profile of CCOs in the communities they serve and shifted the perception of what they can offer.

This section of the report provides a brief background to the history of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. At the start of the evaluation in March 2022, a programme timeline was developed with the evaluation Sounding Board. This timeline (see below) captured the development of the programme from its early roots to the present day, identifying key phases and events as well as important “light-bulb” moments that members of the Sounding Board identified as key lessons underpinning the success of the programme and its evolution.

The programme timeline was then shared with CCOs at the PLCF's national conference in April 2022 and, with contributions from representatives of all CCOs across England and Wales, a CCO timeline of the programme was developed, which can also be found below. The combination of both timelines provides programme-wide and local CCO perspectives on the growth and evolution of the Premier League Primary Stars programme.

A summary of the history and roots of the programme based on these timelines is shared below:

History and kick off (1990's – 2015)

Historically, professional football clubs have been **connected with their local communities** (Stone, 2018) but during the 1990s this community activity was expanded to include educational activities. During this time football clubs

began delivering their **own educational programmes**. In 1997, the Department for Education launched their 'Playing for Success' programme which informed early thinking for national education programmes alongside the education activities that clubs were delivering.

In 2002 the Premier League began working with the National Literacy Trust to deliver the **Premier League Primary Reading Stars** programme and in the early 2010s the Premier League School Sports programme began, a precursor to the Premier League Primary Stars programme. These different activities and programmes provided an understanding of what was needed at a national level, club level and in schools and was distilled into the **Premier League Primary Stars programme which launched in 2016**.

Consolidation and growth (2016 – 2019)

The Premier League Primary Stars programme enthuses young learners by connecting learning to the world of sport through delivering a **blend of sport and learning activities**. Its overarching goal is 'to use the appeal of the Premier League and professional football clubs to **inspire children aged 5-11 years of age to learn, be active and develop important life skills**.' Initially, the programme was focused on quantity with a national target of reaching 10,000 schools by 2019. When this was achieved within the first 11 months of the programme, the target was raised to 15,000 schools, which was achieved seven months later. A pivotal point for the programme came in 2017 with the launch of the first **Premier League Writing Stars and poetry programme**. This enabled communities and schools to see the programme as more than a football programme and elevated its reputation through mass engagement and celebrity involvement. By mid-2018, having achieved ambitious targets and raised the profile and scope of the programme, it was able to **focus on quality rather than quantity**.

Pandemic to current day and beyond (2020 onwards)

A key milestone for the programme occurred in March 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and schools and society going into lockdown. This required a rapid response from CCOs with a changed offer. They pivoted to their **digital offer; organising and delivering home learning packs** and revamped their programme offer to provide support to teachers to keep schools running and support with the curriculum and children's wellbeing. This response showcased the **adaptability, flexibility and the skills** they could offer, allowing schools to see CCOs, delivery staff and the programme as huge and complex and **being more than about football and sport**. Today there is much greater recognition of the **holistic programme delivered through Premier League Primary Stars** and that CCOs can be trusted providers for education, although there is still work to be done.

Figure 1: Premier League Primary Stars Timeline 1: History & Kick Off

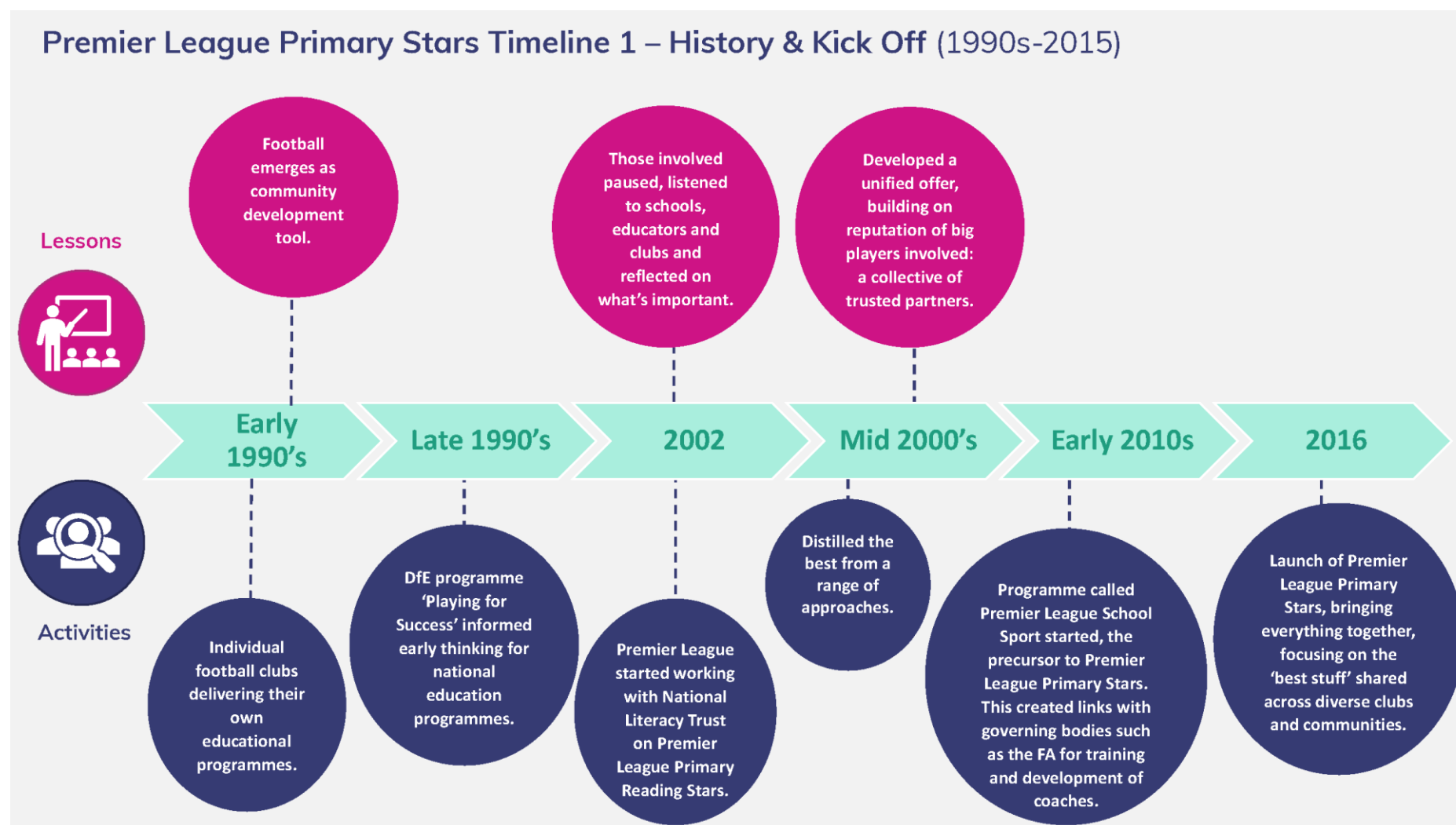


Figure 2: Premier League Primary Stars Timeline 2: Consolidation and growth

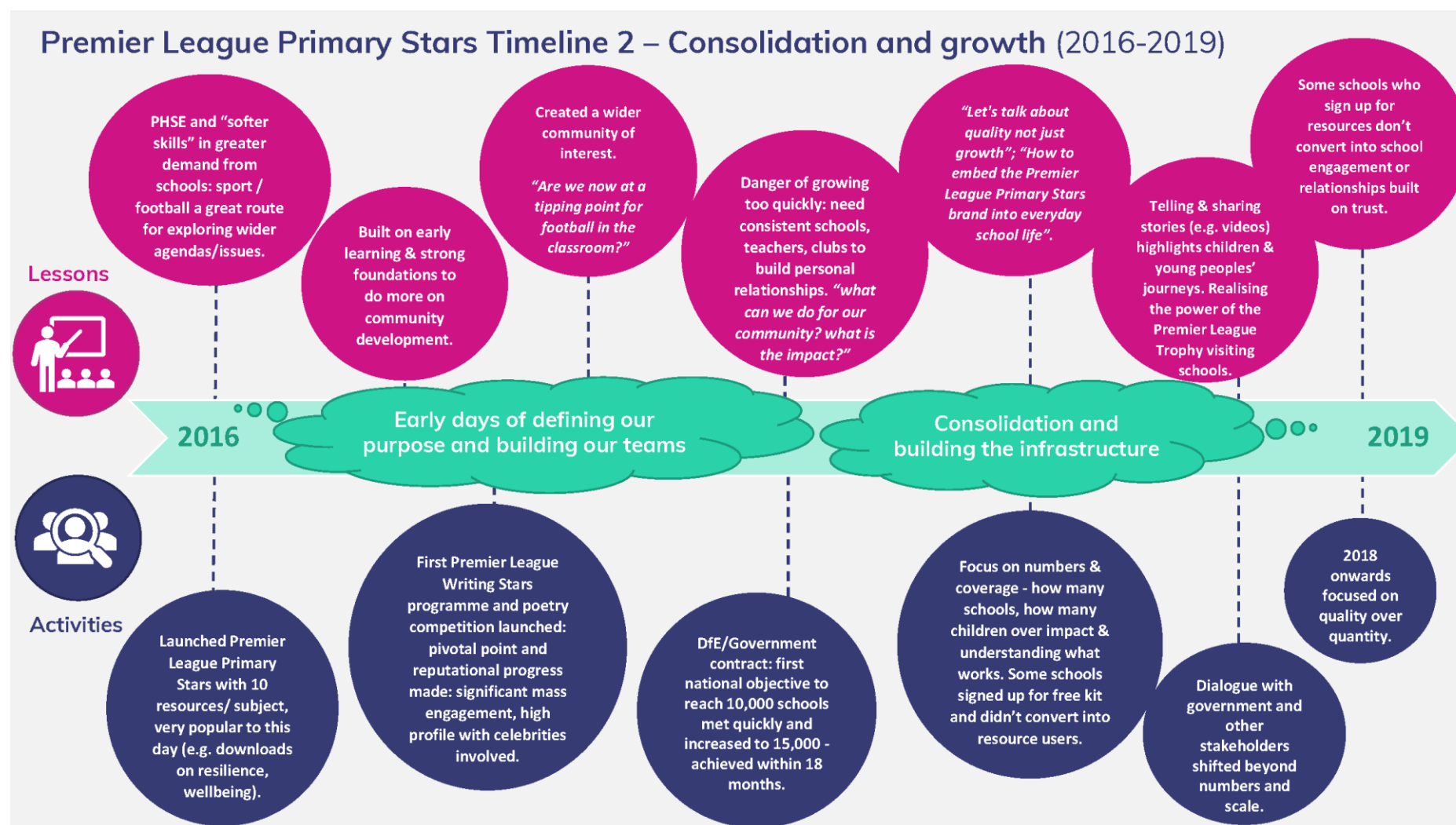


Figure 3: Premier League Primary Stars Timeline 3: Current day & beyond

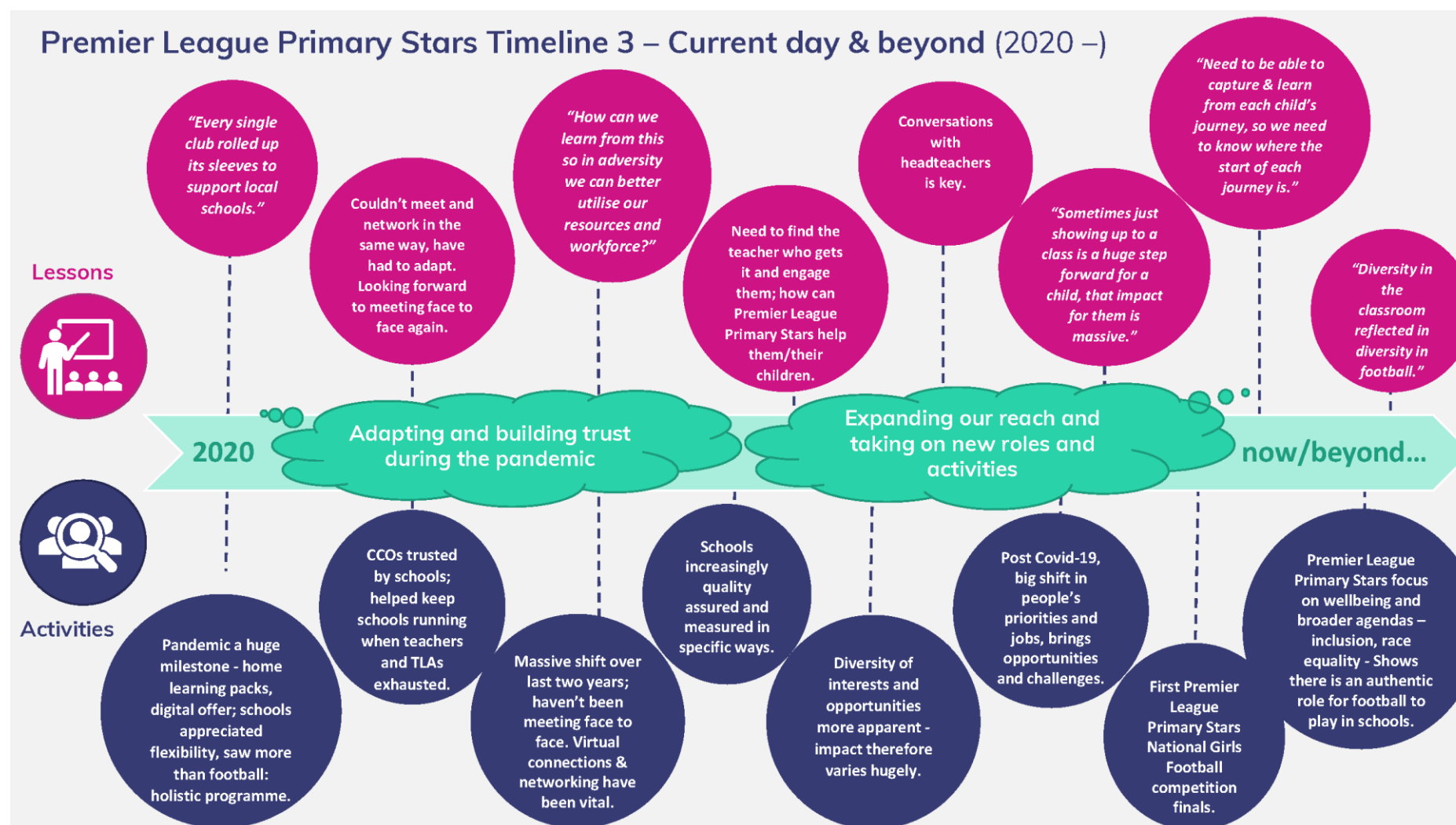


Figure 4: Premier League Primary Stars CCO Timeline 1: year 2016

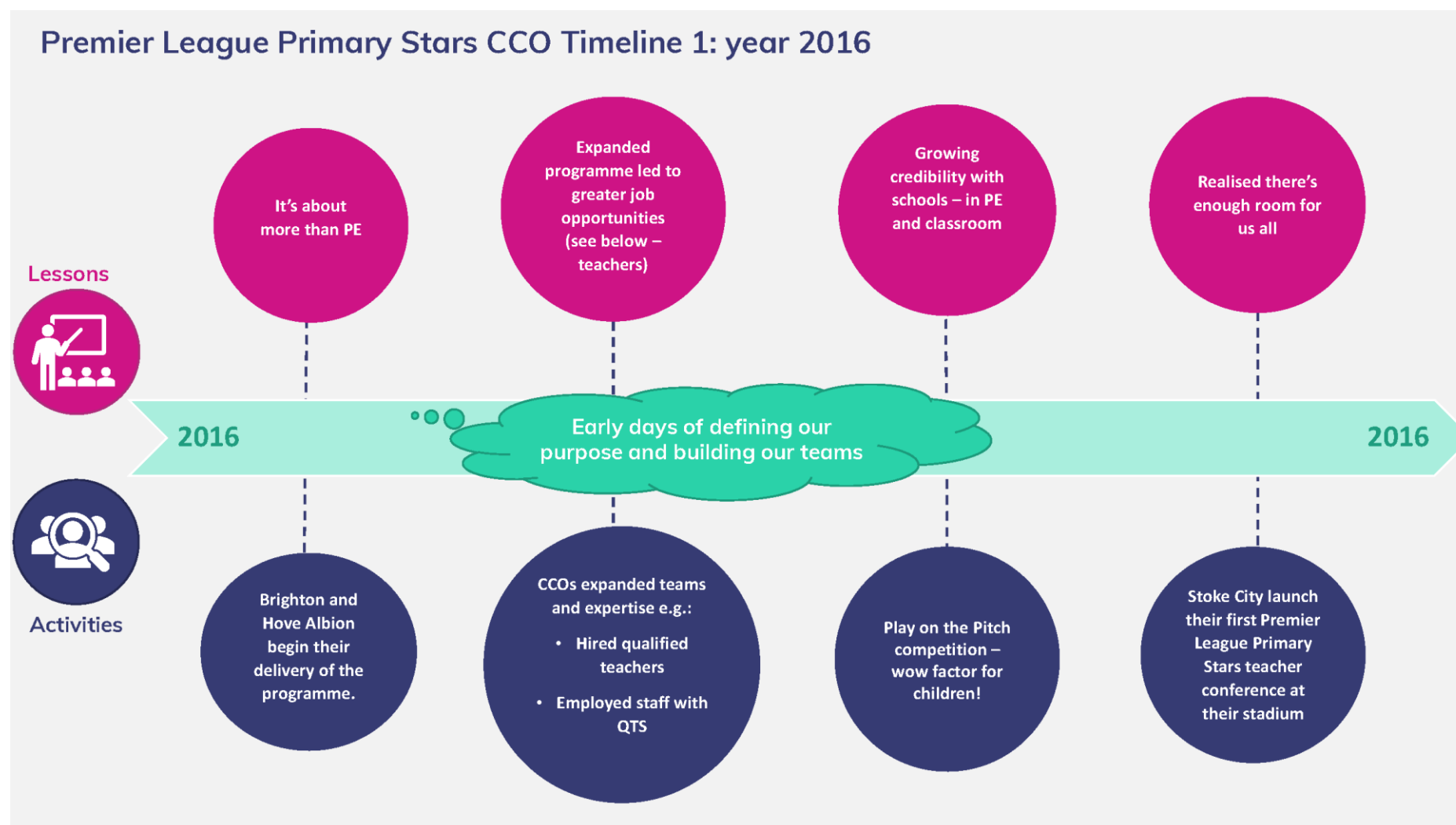


Figure 5: Premier League Primary Stars CCO Timeline 2: year 2017-2019

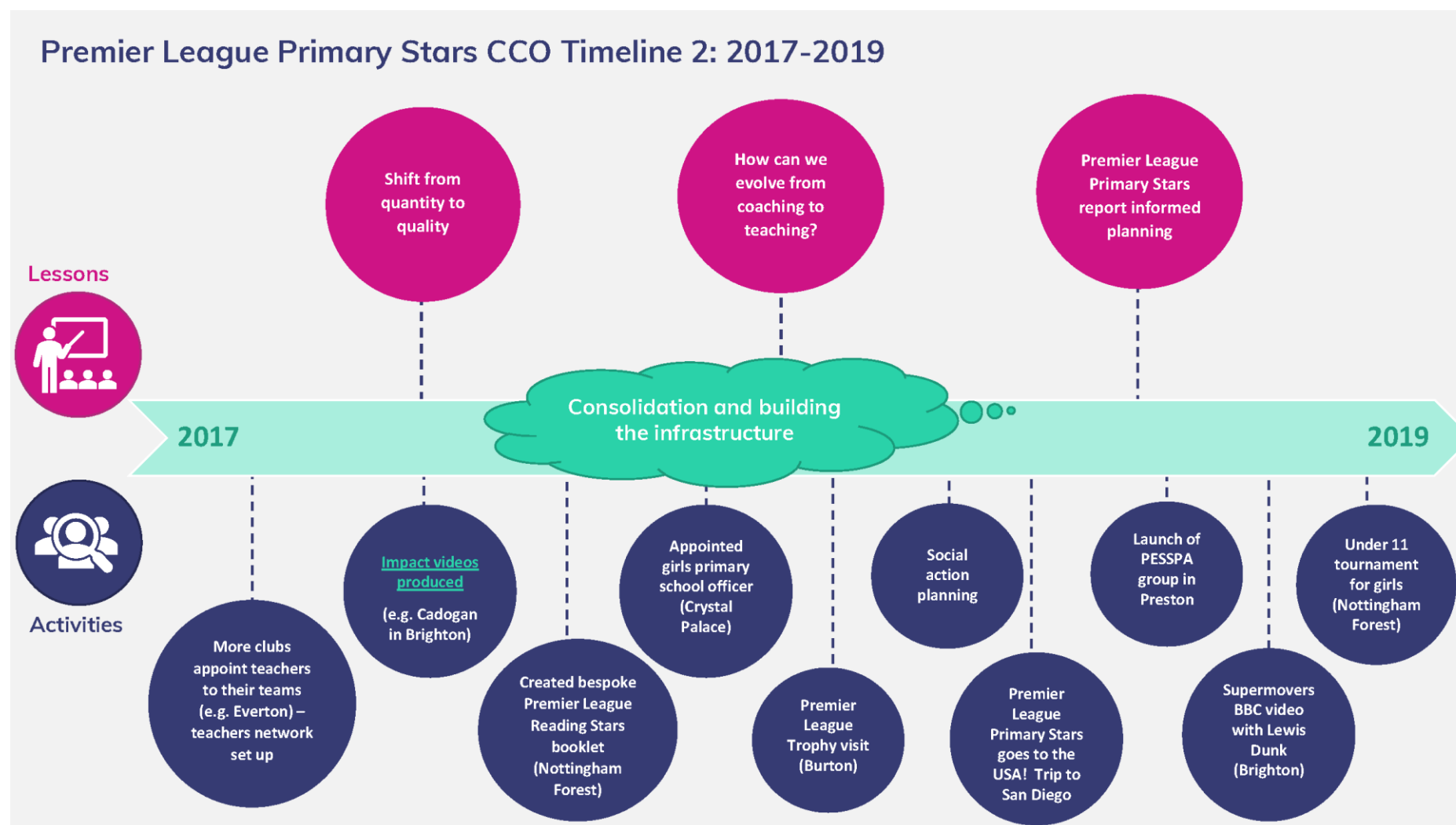


Figure 6: Premier League Primary Stars CCO Timeline 3: year 2020

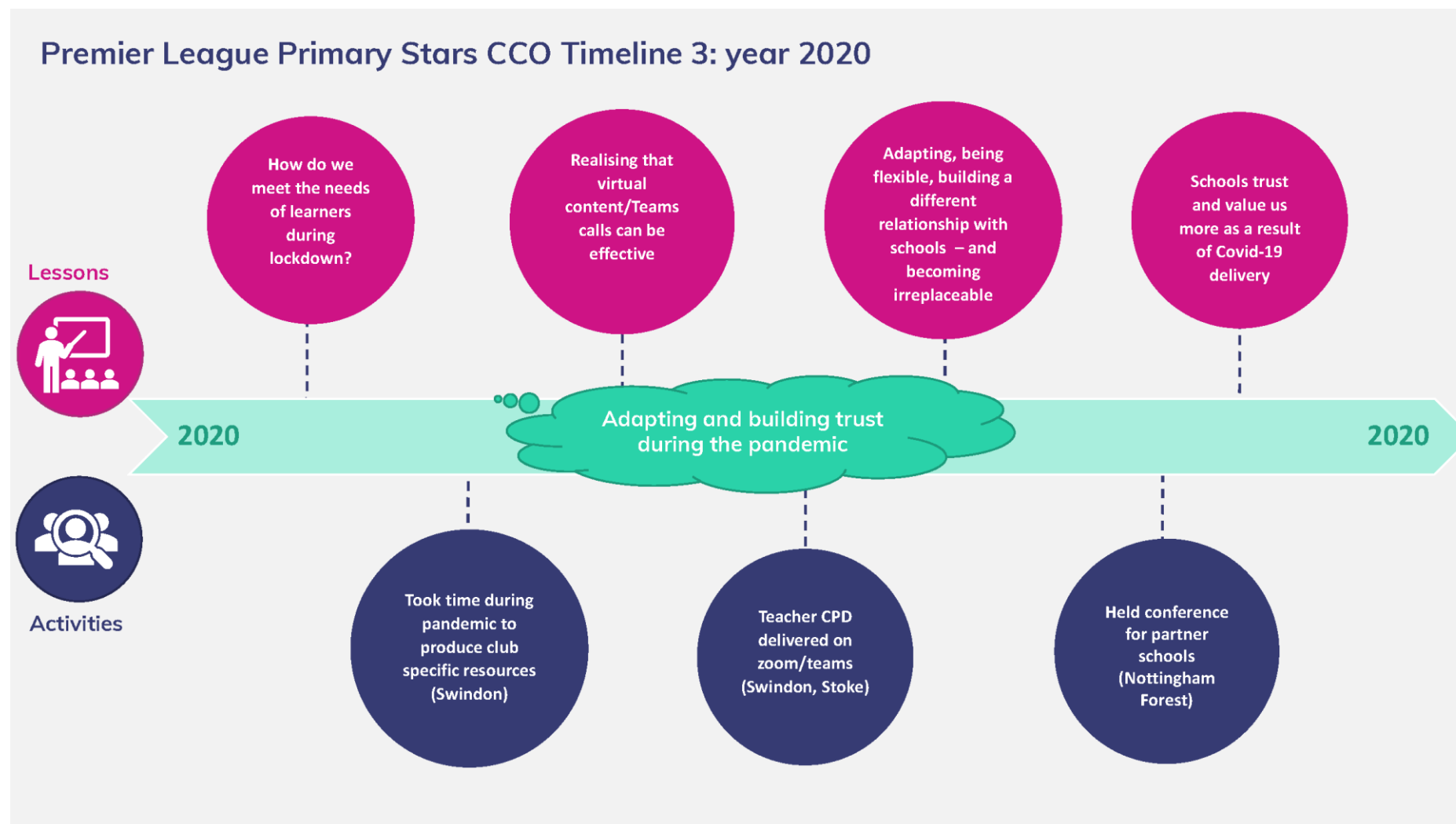
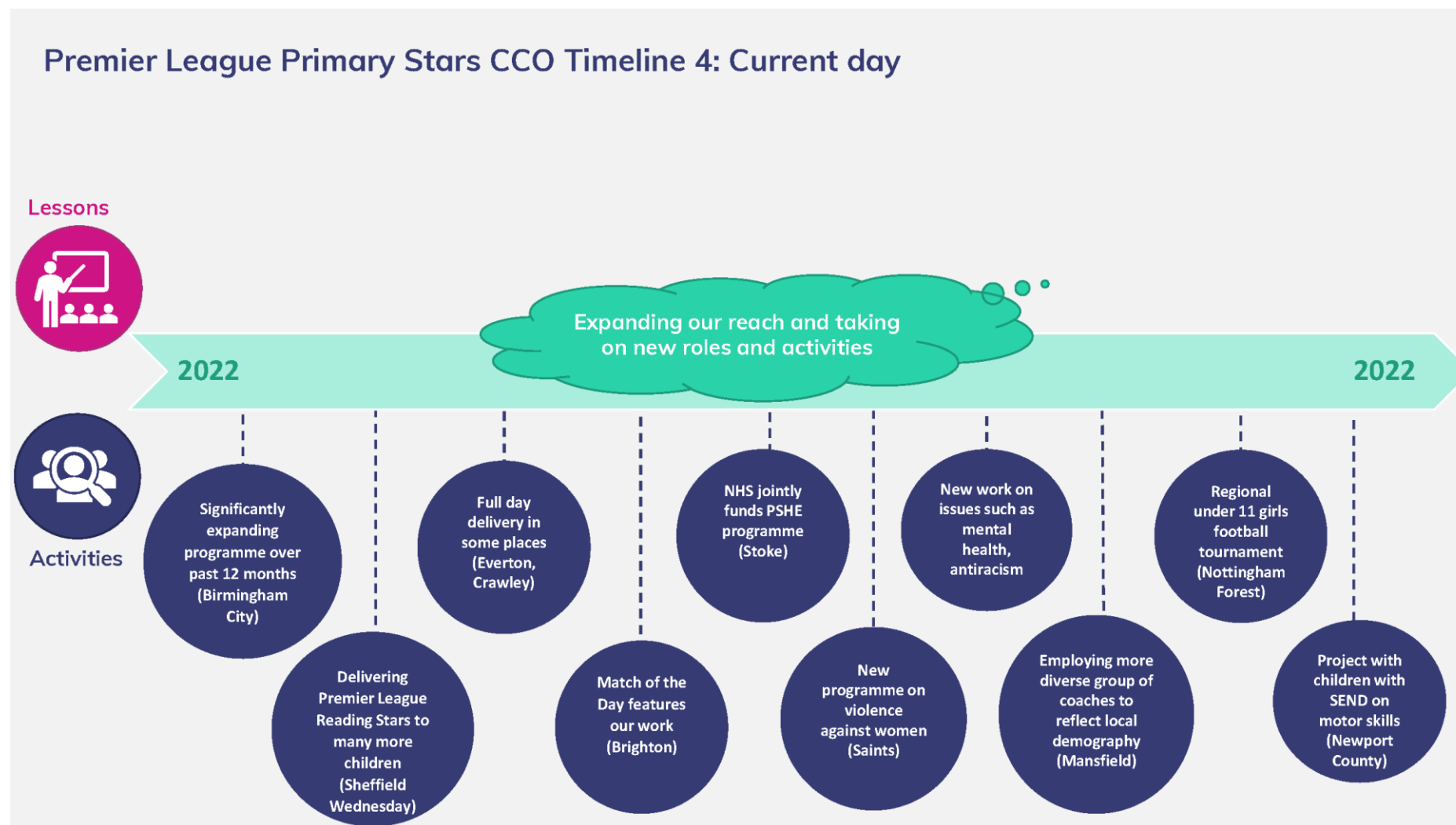


Figure 7: Premier League Primary Stars CCO Timeline 4: Current day





3. What is Premier League Primary Stars today?

Headlines

- Premier League Primary Stars is now a huge, complex and diverse programme, delivered by 105 CCOs, that continues to evolve and grow.
- Responsiveness is a fundamentally important characteristic of the programme, both to external events, such as the Covid 19 pandemic, as well as to the unique circumstances of individual schools and communities.
- The programme is made up of a number of key components, including PE support, CPD for teachers and targeted interventions in maths, English and PSHE, underpinned by the Premier League core values and relying upon highly skilled coaches and delivery teams.
- CCOs approach delivery in different ways, with some focusing primarily on extending their reach to as many schools as possible, while others prefer to build deeper long-term relationships with a smaller number of schools.
- KPIs for the programme are primarily quantitative but a Theory of Change and outcome measures sit alongside these and CCOs have developed their own approaches to capturing change locally.

This section of the report provides an overview of the Premier League Primary Stars programme today, highlighting its key components and the diverse methods of delivery and organisation across CCOs.

Overview

“I’m blown away by the number of children we work with and are affecting”
(Coach, Palace for Life Foundation)

Today, the Premier League Primary Stars programme is available to (although not actively delivered in) every primary school in England and Wales and is delivered by 105 CCOs with the following objectives:

- Enhance the knowledge, skills, and confidence of teachers to improve delivery of PE and school sport.

- Increase children's enjoyment, participation and skills in competitive and non-competitive sports and physical activity.
- Increase children's understanding of the personal skills and values needs to achieve their goals.
- Enhance children's interest, understanding and confidence in English and maths.
- Support young people into further participation pathways into sport.

It is recognised by all involved as a huge and complex programme which has changed since its inception:

"It was initially thought of as CPD for staff but has evolved over time to be so much more than this."
(Headteacher, Southampton)

It is also described as a massively responsive programme, quickly reacting to events such as the COVID-19 pandemic described previously or educating children about racism and allyship through their [No Room for Racism](#) resources. As well as responding to external events, the programme is attuned to the needs and characteristics of individual schools and to individual children:

This responsiveness means that it has now developed into a diverse, all-encompassing programme which attempts to provide a balance of bespoke, locally tailored offers alongside a broader, core menu.

"I try and get down to their level and see what they struggle with and try to understand them as best as I can." (Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

3.1 Key components

Today the Premier League Primary Stars programme comprises a number of key components:

- The core values of being inspiring, ambitious, connected and fair and these are communicated to schools and children at all points of the programme.
- Physical Education (PE) whereby coaches support teachers during PE lessons to deliver high quality PE lessons.
- Teachers' CPD to help them develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in PE.

- Social Action projects which enable children to address an identified social need in their local community, building confidence and important life skills in the process.
- One off events, workshops, and tournaments, often held at host Football Club stadiums, a huge pull for children involved.
- High quality resources developed and available on the Premier League Primary Stars website, which are used by coaches and teaching staff in schools participating in the programme and is also freely available to all schools (including those not involved in the programme).
- Skilled coaches and delivery staff in the CCOs. There is a minimum standards operating framework for coaches and delivery staff and a minimum qualification for coaching at a UKCC Level 2 coaching qualification or equivalent. Additionally, there are many coaches delivering the Premier League Primary Stars programme who are also qualified teachers.
- Targeted interventions focused on maths, English and PSHE and delivered to children who require additional support in one of these curriculum areas (a full list of targeted interventions delivered by CCOs in 2021-22 can be found in [Appendix 4](#)).

3.2 Organisation and Delivery

Pre the 2022/23 year, the 105 CCOs were organised into four tiers, Tier 1 to Tier 4, with each CCO receiving a pre-specified amount of funding to deliver the Premier League Primary Stars programme based on their Tier level. However, this funding distribution is changing from September 2022 with the new funding round. CCOs deliver the programme to children, predominantly KS2 children, in primary schools within their geographical area. However, there are many different delivery models across the CCOs with some delivering:

- To a high number of schools/children in their area for short periods of time to achieve quantity.
- To a smaller number of schools/children for longer periods of time to achieve quality and foster long-term relationships.
- To schools in areas of high social and economic deprivation where they feel they can make the most difference.
- To schools within a given geographic boundary which may be small, covering a particular city area, or wide, covering several counties.
- To schools varying in size and type e.g., multi-form vs single form entry, part of multi academy trusts or not, religious, faith or non-denominational.

There are also delivery and performance expectations through the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are mainly quantitative in nature, e.g., number of PE lessons supported, number of targeted interventions

delivered; and are set by the individual CCOs and reviewed by the PLCF. Progress towards the KPIs is reported monthly to the PLCF. The programme also has an outcomes framework based on a Theory of Change, with some outcomes shared across the Premier League Communities Programmes, and some which are specific to the Premier League Primary Stars programme. The Theory of Change can be seen in [Appendix 1](#) and Outcomes Framework can be seen in [Appendix 2](#).

Outcome data is collected by CCOs, primarily through a variety of questionnaires for children and teachers. However, there are concerns from CCO staff that the questionnaires are not particularly accurate or effective, as many of the questions asked do not measure the intended outcome. For example, for the outcome 'participants have improved attendance at school' one question is 'I like asking questions in class'. Some CCOs have also commented that the questionnaires do not relate clearly to the topics that they are increasingly addressing through targeted interventions, such as mental health. CCOs also regularly collect case studies, conduct observations of sessions, and have individual discussions with children and teachers, which are often considered more beneficial in demonstrating progress.

Many of the CCOs have also set up their own, additional methods of measuring impact to complement the questionnaires. Some CCOs set up their own surveys for children and/or teachers which they distribute and analyse on a regular basis. Other CCOs use more child friendly mechanisms for data collection, for example:

- Swansea City Foundation have developed a performance wheel to measure outcomes related to PE. With this method children are asked to complete a target wheel, pre and post the block of PE sessions, by colouring in different segments related to questions about PE, e.g., I enjoy PE, I can show control when changing direction etc.
- Cambridge United Community Trust use a range of data collection tools to capture evidence and showcase evidence. They also use the questionnaires to inform delivery in a Cycle of Implementation ([see Cambridge United vignette, Appendix 3](#)).

This range, variation and complexity of approaches to organising and delivering the Premier League Primary Stars programme raises some dilemmas for the PLCF:

- i. To what extent is the goal about reach, delivering to a high number of schools/children or about depth, quality and making difference by targeting a smaller number of schools where the most difference can be made?

- ii. Should CCOs be focused on developing long-term relationships with smaller numbers of schools or on growth and recruiting lots of new schools?
- iii. Whilst the need for data collection and achieving outcomes is a priority for the PLCF as a charitable organisation, how much should be collected as routine quantitative data across all CCOs and how much as tailored qualitative data unique to individual CCOs?

These dilemmas will be returned to in the final section of the report where we look at what next for the programme.



4. What are targeted interventions and where do they fit?

Headlines

- Targeted interventions provide additional support to children in English, maths and PSHE. Some of these are well-established interventions with a set of resources, such as Premier League Reading Stars, while many others have been developed by CCOs in response to local need.
- All targeted interventions can be bespoke to some extent, and in the case of PSHE, the definition has become sufficiently elastic to accommodate an enormous range of interventions covering topics from equality and diversity to rail safety.
- Although targeted interventions cover a very wide range of topics and activities, it is clear that the Premier League values lie at the heart of all that is delivered.
- There is considerable variation in how CCOs offer and deliver targeted interventions to schools, but most commonly, a targeted intervention will last between six and 12 weeks.
- CCOs also differ in their approach to charging schools for targeted interventions, with some offering free delivery, while others have decided that some level of payment is likely to increase school engagement.
- The impact of targeted interventions is captured primarily by the pre and post intervention questionnaires, but these have some limitations.

4.1 What are targeted interventions?

Targeted interventions are activities related to English, maths or PSHE delivered in schools to support children who require additional support in one of those curriculum areas (a full list of targeted interventions delivered in 2021-22 can be found in [Appendix 4](#)). The activities may occur during curricular or extra-curricular time; and may be delivered to the whole class, a small group of children or as one-to-one support in the class. Whilst there are some long-standing targeted interventions, for example, Premier League Reading Stars with a set of standard resources, many targeted interventions have been developed over time and in response to local need. For example:

- Maths Attack delivered by Burnley FC in the Community and the PSHE programmes

- ‘Resilient Rammie and Winning Minds’ delivered by Derby County Community Trust
 - The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme delivered by Chelsea FC Foundation
 - The Rail Safety programme delivered by Burton Albion Community Trust.
- [\(Further details for each of the above are provided in Appendix 3.\)](#)

Even long-standing interventions such as Premier League Reading Stars have been tweaked to meet the local need, be that of the school or child. These adaptations to the targeted interventions have meant that, today, their definition has become very elastic. This is particularly the case in relation to PSHE, which appears to be a catch-all category for everything that does not fit into English or maths. However, despite the elasticity in definition of targeted interventions, the Premier League values underpin the work delivered and provide a framework for consistency. This flexibility of approach is generally valued by schools and CCOs alike but can pose a challenge in terms of demonstrating and evaluating their impact.

4.2 Targeted interventions – the offer

The ways by which targeted interventions are offered to schools varies across the CCOs. Some schools have a core offer for all schools in their area. For example, Club Doncaster Foundation offers Premier League Reading Stars to all their schools as standard, although maths or PSHE may be delivered instead of, or as well as, Premier League Reading Stars if the school requests this. Other CCOs, for example Swansea City Foundation, have a menu of offers from which schools can choose. Whatever the initial offer, the final delivery is negotiated between the school and the CCO, and this is seen as one of the core components of a successful targeted intervention:

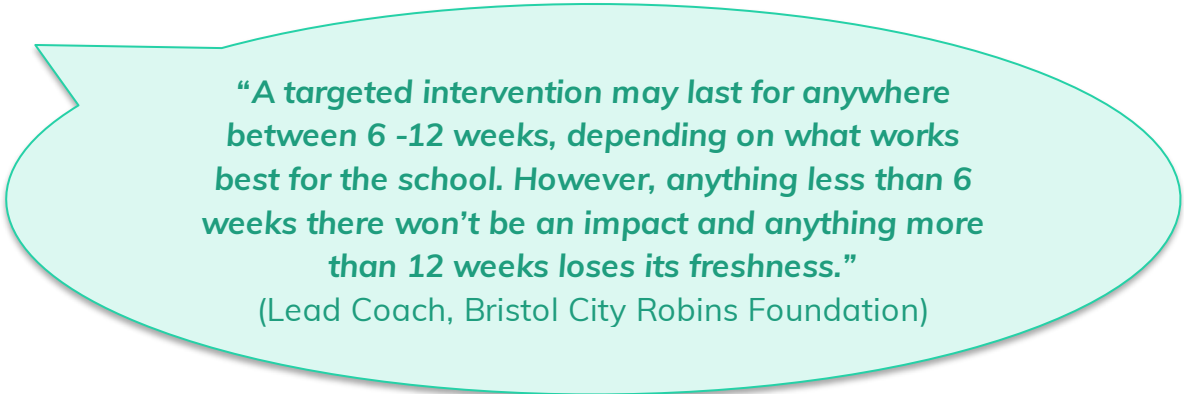
“Discussions with the school prior to delivery to ensure the intervention topic is needed and specific to the pupils.”
(NDTi CCO Survey)

To ensure the targeted intervention is specific to the needs of the children, the children are selected by the school; although in schools where there is a long-standing relationship between the school and CCO, this may be negotiated as well. Children are selected based on school-led assessments, SEND need, pastoral need or Pupil Premium status.

4.3 Targeted interventions – delivery

There is considerable variability across CCOs regarding the delivery of targeted interventions. Whilst they are delivered to a whole class, small groups or one-to-one, how this happens varies. Targeted interventions may be delivered to the whole class by the coach/delivery staff without the teacher present or with the teacher present; a coach/delivery staff may take a group of children out of the class; work with a group in the class whilst the teacher is teaching the rest of the class; or support a single child within the class. In some cases, the targeted intervention may be delivered by a partner organisation, as discussed in [section 5](#).

Over 80% of targeted interventions are delivered during the school day (NDTi CCO and Schools Survey), and delivery may take place inside or outside the classroom depending on the intervention and space available in the school. There are some one-off events, but the minimum length of delivery is usually six weeks and the maximum 12 weeks. A delivery block of six weeks means that the intervention can be delivered to more children in more schools, especially important in a large school, but a 12-week block is likely to have greater impact:



“A targeted intervention may last for anywhere between 6 -12 weeks, depending on what works best for the school. However, anything less than 6 weeks there won’t be an impact and anything more than 12 weeks loses its freshness.”
(Lead Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

The length of delivery will also determine the frequency with which coaches/delivery staff are in school. Some are in schools once a week for a short period of time, others may be in more than once a week, or once a week for a longer period of time. As well as clear communication during the set-up period, ongoing, two-way communication is another core component of a successful targeted intervention (NDTi CCO Survey). Discussion between class teachers and coaches/delivery staff is variable across CCOs, but in many cases it is occurring frequently and informally as well as more formal communication. This is explored in more detail in [section 5](#).

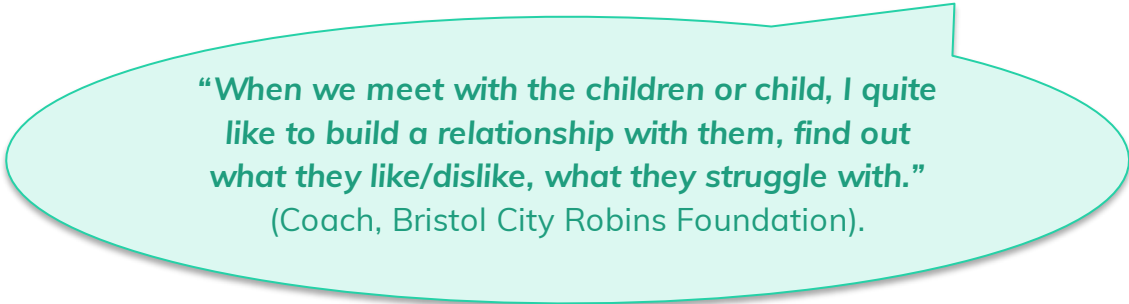
Payment for the targeted interventions is also variable. Some CCOs offer a Premier League Primary Stars package, including an element of targeted interventions for free whilst others offer a menu of packages at different price points. There are different views regarding payment. Offering the package for free means that greater reach can be obtained as schools are far more likely to take up the offer; as a result, CCOs can achieve quantitative KPIs although

schools may be less likely to take the offer as seriously. Some CCOs offer a free package hoping that this will encourage schools to invest in a paid package in the future; however, this is not necessarily the case. Offering a paid package provides a level of sustainability for CCOs supplementing the funding from the PLCF, and there is a view that schools take the offer more seriously when they are paying for it (resulting in them investing more time and effort into the programme and coming back for more).

4.4 Methods for capturing and sharing impact with schools

Measuring the impact of targeted interventions is primarily achieved through the programme's pre and post questionnaires. These are completed and the results are recorded centrally. Impact against the outcomes is then fed back to CCOs in terms of the total number of completed pre and post questionnaires and the percentage improvement for each outcome. However, what is not provided is the breakdown by targeted intervention, so CCOs cannot cross reference the percentage improvement for an outcome by targeted intervention. Some CCOs are producing this information for themselves, which can then be used to improve the delivery of targeted interventions and shared with schools, e.g., The Saints Foundation Primary Stars (Interventions Only) Progress Towards Outcomes Report.

Coaches/delivery staff work directly with children and gain feedback from them using the questionnaires, although children can find some of the questions difficult to answer and need support to respond. Some CCOs have developed creative, child-friendly methods to gain feedback from children. For example, Watford Community Sports & Education Trust ([See Appendix 3, Watford Vignette](#)). Many coaches/delivery staff also gain feedback through regular discussions:



“When we meet with the children or child, I quite like to build a relationship with them, find out what they like/dislike, what they struggle with.”
(Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation).



5. How relationships and partnerships enable successful delivery of targeted interventions

Headlines

- CCOs prioritise building positive relationships with schools, which is clearly paying off – our survey found that 100% of schools had a good relationship with their CCO.
- Good relationships with schools have several different aspects, including preparing the ground well, agreeing mutual expectations, building relationships at every level, becoming embedded in the school team and sharing information.
- Coaches have a different kind of relationship with children, which relies on an informal working style, understanding children as individuals and enabling children's voices to be heard.
- There is an opportunity to develop relationships with parents further.
- Delivery partnerships with other organisations can involve either delivering **alongside** others, or **on behalf** of others. Partners are consistently positive about the skills and responsiveness of CCO staff.

The success and impact of targeted interventions rely upon a series of key relationships, including with schools, children, delivery partners and others. The findings on each of these important relationships and partnerships are set out below. Overall, though, CCOs are generally seen as excellent partners, who are skilled, reliable, and responsive, and who understand the value of investing in making relationships work.

5.1 Relationships with schools

“Within a school, within any organisation, communication is vital.” (Lead coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

The relationship with primary schools lies at the heart of the Premier League Primary Stars programme and CCOs are clearly committed to building and maintaining a positive connection with the schools they work with. Our school

survey found that 100% of schools get on with their CCO either very well or well. This commitment has several different aspects, which are summarised below.

Preparing the ground

CCOs emphasised the importance of preparation before moving into the delivery phase of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. For some, preparation started at a very early stage, as they selected the schools to approach. Some CCOs used publicly available data on, for example, attainment, to select schools that might benefit from Premier League Reading Stars, or from maths support. Others spoke with local authorities about the areas experiencing issues such as knife crime, so they could tailor their offer accordingly.

Initial meetings with the school also made an important contribution to preparing the ground for the delivery of targeted interventions. Both coaches and schools highlighted the value of the initial conversations in increasing understanding of the programme and also of the children who would be taking part.

“Ever since I’ve done these initial meetings, the schools I work with have been amazing, I’ve had no issues.”
(Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

“(The coach) is very aware of the needs of the children within the classroom before going into the room. Which is vital really, particularly at this school.” (Deputy Head, Bristol)

Agreeing mutual expectations

Most CCOs set out the terms of the relationship with schools in a formal Service Level Agreement that includes what schools can expect from being part of the Premier League Primary Stars Programme, as well as the expectations on schools. In at least one case, the CCO had decided to emphasise the need for schools to collect and share data, as this had proved to be a consistent issue:

“We struggle with schools not wanting to collect any data. We’re reviewing the school agreement now. It needs to be clear that we only deliver if schools share data.” (Data Lead, Albion in the Community)

Building the right relationships at every level

CCOs all have at least one key contact in the schools where they deliver targeted interventions, and in most cases, they have several, including the Head/Deputy Head, the PE Lead and sometimes the Head of Year. At the same time, coaches interact with staff at many levels and in different roles.

CCOs firstly emphasised the importance of connecting with schools at a senior level, to strengthen engagement and ownership among the wider staff team.

“It’s no coincidence that the schools we’ve maintained a good relationship with and continue to work in are the schools where, and it’s not just me, it’s the other coaches as well, we have a very strong relationship with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher or someone within the SLT.”
(Lead Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

One coach commented that it would also be useful to have stronger relationships across the school staff team, with for example, Heads of Reading or Maths, as the targeted interventions focus on these areas and often take a cross-curricular approach.

But it is not just the relationships with senior staff and teachers that make a difference. Other CCOs discussed the contribution of day to day, opportunistic interactions with staff in setting a positive tone and creating a good impression of the CCO and the club:

“... you have to be able to go into a school and speak to a child in the right way, but you also have to be able to speak to the teachers in the right way, to the cleaners in the right way, to the receptionists in the right way, that is what sells us.” (Lead coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

“You need to be very polite and respectful to everyone, and that even means like the dinner lady, the lollipop lady, the kitchen staff, everyone, because there’ll be a time when you need them... I want to make the relationship with that school better.”

(Coach, Bristol City Robins Foundation)

Becoming embedded in the school team

Another important aspect of successful delivery is when and how coaches become embedded within, and seen as part of, the school team. Over time, when CCOs are invited back over several school years to work with different year groups, Premier League Primary Stars becomes part of the curriculum and CCO staff can become embedded within the school. This means that trusting relationships are established, and it is easier to shape what is delivered, and to which children, through a continuing dialogue:

“From our perspective it is feeling part of the school staff. So even though we might not be there all the time as you're welcomed in the staff room, or you can go in and have your lunch there and that kind of thing, and you do feel part of the furniture at the school.” (Coach, Swansea City AFC Foundation Trust)

“The schools I feel very comfortable in, I feel like a member of staff. It’s about having the conversation.”

(Coach, Burnley FC in the Community)

Feeding back and exchanging information

The information that CCOs share with schools is variable. Some respondents to NDTi’s schools’ survey stated that they received no feedback from CCOs, whilst others reported receiving impact information based on the pre and post questionnaires as well as annual impact reports (such as that described in the [Albion in the Community vignette](#), appended) and case studies (for a selection

of case studies and change stories, [click here](#)). The most frequent form of feedback is informal and verbal with coaches/delivery staff having regular conversations with teachers at the end of sessions or on a weekly or termly basis:

“Regular conversations with all our schools have shown they see a real value in what we're delivering and the impact it's having on their pupils.” (NDTi CCO Survey)

Whether and how schools share information with CCOs is also variable. Some schools and CCOs report that information about children is not shared with CCOs prior to them going in to deliver a programme of work. Some CCOs received attendance data, some teachers share specific information regarding individual children and their needs, and some schools share attainment data reporting progress against benchmarks such as KS1/KS2 reading scores.

From the above it is clear that obtaining impact information specifically on targeted interventions needs further work, as does looking at the ways information is shared between schools and CCOs.

5.2 Relationships with children

There is wide agreement, among CCO staff and schools, that coaches relate to children in a different way to their teachers. As mentioned earlier, the ‘power of the badge’ is one element of this, but alongside the badge, CCO staff work in a less formal way with children, often in small groups or one to one, and using a mix of creative and active approaches to learning.

Understanding children as individuals


Another element of this different relationship was having a better understanding of children as individuals, often developed through working informally in small groups.

“We relate to kids differently. We understand them as individuals.” (Programme Manager, Burnley FC in the Community)

The flexibility offered by targeted interventions means that coaches can tailor their sessions to suit the needs and preferences of different combinations of children, using a mix of classroom-based and active approaches. In addition, for some children, from families living in particularly challenging circumstances,

a CCO coach could be the most consistent and positive relationship that the child had in their life.

Ensuring that children have a voice



“It’s about giving (children) a voice.”
(Lead coach, Palace for Life Foundation)

Children’s voices operates at two different levels within Premier League Primary Stars:

- Within targeted intervention sessions
- At the level of programme design and feedback.

Children who are often reluctant to speak in class may be more likely to contribute to a smaller, less formal Premier League Primary Stars session. We observed children who were very quiet at the beginning of a session grow in confidence by the end, thanks to the supportive encouragement of a coach. Also, where sensitive topics such as race or gender are concerned, coaches have created sessions where children are more likely to speak openly during a Premier League Primary Stars session.

Most CCOs agreed that systematically incorporating children’s voices into programme design was an area for further development. Some had held stadium-based celebration events at the end of programmes, which had included a feedback session looking at what children had liked about the programme as well as what they would change. Another way of gaining the child’s voice is through Youth Boards, which are often used to enable children to have a voice in the development of the programme and targeted interventions. For example, the Youth Board set up by Tigers Trust in the Community ([see Appendix 3, Tigers Trust vignette](#)).

5.3 Relationships with parents

Another area where CCOs felt there was more to be done was in building the relationship with parents. Engagement with parents is reportedly minimal and seems to reflect schools’ patterns of engagement with parents. 52% of the schools surveyed report communicating with parents about the programme and the targeted interventions their children are involved in. Where parents are informed it is often via the school’s website or newsletter. Occasionally, parents are informed at parents’ evenings, with some CCOs invited to participate in these events

Only 10% of CCOs report that they ask for parental feedback (NDTi CCO Survey). Methods used to achieve this include questionnaires, quotes, testimonials and speaking directly with them. In addition, CCOs provide limited feedback to parents. From interviews with parents, it would appear that children are being used as messengers between the CCO and home to provide information about the programme and targeted interventions. Engagement with children and parents would appear to be an area for development for CCOs, with the above examples of Youth Boards, attending parents' evenings and using parent questionnaires/surveys offering useful approaches that could be spread to other CCOs.

5.4 Relationships with partners in delivering Premier League Primary Stars sessions

Most CCOs work in partnership with other specialist organisations to deliver some elements of the Premier League Primary Stars targeted interventions. These partnerships tend to fall into two groups:

- Delivering **alongside** local specialist organisations with expertise in sensitive topics such as domestic violence or knife crime
- Delivering **on behalf of** organisations who provide training for coaches, help with programme design and access to resources.

The examples below illustrate these two different approaches.

Joint local delivery

Example – Yellow Door

“We are respectful of each other’s expertise”
(Delivery Partner, Yellow Door).

Yellow Door is a charity supporting adults and young people experiencing sexual and domestic abuse across Southampton. They provide both therapy for individuals and their families, and through their Star project, an educational outreach programme to all educational and youth settings. Saints Foundation and Yellow Door agreed to work together when funding became available through the city’s Violence Reduction Unit and designed a pilot programme on violence against women and girls called Teammates. This targets children in Year 6, so sits within Premier League Primary Stars. Yellow Door contributes expertise on prevention work and access to support that may be needed as a result of delivering the workshops.

It was agreed that Teammates would be targeted towards those areas of the city that are particularly affected by sexual and domestic violence, which involved working in six schools in deprived areas where Saints Foundation already had a presence. The programme was therefore able to benefit from Saints Foundation's existing relationships, alongside the specialist expertise of Yellow Door.

The sessions were co-facilitated between Yellow Door and Saints Foundation, and feedback to date has been very positive, both from participating schools and the young people involved. Both Yellow Door and Saints Foundation are keen to build on this pilot and feel that the approach could be rolled out to other CCO's and schools.

Acting as a delivery partner

Example 1 – Planet League

“They're a pleasure to work with, easy to engage with.”

(National Partner – Planet League)

70 CCOs work with the small national organisation Planet League to help CCOs deliver on their sustainability commitments. Planet League provide free cross-curricular resources and educational materials that CCOs can use with schools to broaden their offer. They also provide remote training for coaches.

Resources can be used flexibly to fit within different elements of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. For example, the maths element compares the CO₂ produced by families travelling to the match using different methods of transport.

Example 2 – Give Up Loving Pop (GULP)

Healthy Stadia is a small infrastructure organisation that focuses on population-based public health interventions through sport. They work with Burnley on the GULP programme, commissioned by the North West Directors of Public Health (DsPH). GULP is a targeted programme which uses the power of the badge to reduce children's consumption of fizzy drinks. The areas were selected by the DsPH on the basis of dental health and obesity data.

Like Planet League, Healthy Stadia provides resources, slides, example activities and games, to be used flexibly by coaches working in selected schools, as well as training for coaches and access to the 21-day Gulp challenge, asking children to give up fizzy drinks for 21 days.

“The quality of coaches is very high. They are people that respond quickly, who are engaged, switched on, honest, upfront and don’t overpromise” (Partner – Healthy Stadia/GULP, Burnley).

“The high level of performance of CCOs allows us to maintain relationships. We have complete trust in CCOs. We can trust them, and they challenge us, based on their experience” (Ditto).



6. Challenges and barriers: what gets in the way of successful delivery?

Headlines

- Schools (and sometimes children) can see the role of CCOs as being exclusively about sport and do not appreciate the full scope of what they can offer.
- The capacity of both schools and some CCOs is under pressure, which means that it is harder to build the kind of positive relationship upon which targeted interventions depend, as described in the previous section.
- A focus on KPIs can create perverse incentives for CCOs and data collection methods do not reflect the flexibility of the programme.
- There is a danger that CCOs are reinventing wheels, as there are few systematic ways of capturing and sharing learning within the programme.

While positive relationships are an essential enabler for targeted interventions, our evidence highlights a number of areas that can often pose a challenge to successful delivery. This section highlights four potential barriers.

6.1 Perceptions and misconceptions

“Schools see a sporting organisation and see sport. It’s not the first place you’d look if you wanted something around literacy or numeracy.” (Coach, Burnley FC in the Community)

CCOs reported that it could sometimes be a struggle to promote the wide range and scope of their skills and offer to schools, as the assumption was often that CCOs focus solely on sport. This view could also extend to children, particularly when schools had not taken the time to talk through what activities coaches would be doing with them and why.

As the relationship with schools develops, though, there are often more opportunities to showcase the range of interventions that CCOs can deliver, and schools build their understanding of the CCO's role and what is possible.

6.2 Capacity in schools and CCOs

“We do well to keep a coach for two years. This has a massive impact on consistency.”

(Programme Manager, Burnley FC in the Community)

Capacity is an issue for both schools and for some CCOs.

For schools that are under pressure, dedicating the time to plan, share information and review with CCOs can be difficult. CCOs highlighted that for some schools, the Premier League Primary Stars programme offers little more than free input that gives a teacher a clear hour in their busy day.

Some CCOs expressed concerns about their own capacity. Scheduling is a complex task for managers, as all CCOs are committed to maximising delivery time and need to match coaches with availability and the right skills to deliver particular targeted interventions in schools. This is a particular issue for smaller CCOs.

A number of CCOs are struggling to recruit and retain coaching staff. For example, even though one CCO we spoke to has reviewed pay and developed a career pathway, they are still losing staff to local supermarkets.

Staffing pressures within the coaching team have a knock-on effect, as this means that time for programme design, planning and measuring impact suffers, while coaches have to cover extra delivery sessions in schools. It can also mean that the consistency of the coach/school relationship is disrupted.

6.3 Focus on KPIs


“We can create our own programmes, but data collection is standardised.” (Coach, Palace for Life Foundation)

Some CCOs expressed concerns about the approach to KPIs, which could sometimes create perverse incentives to concentrate on delivering to large numbers, at the expense of developing and maintaining long term relationships with schools. For example, some CCOs delivered one off sessions to large

numbers of local schools as part of Black History Month and as a result, met their KPI on delivering education workshops for the year in a single month.

All CCOs value the flexibility and responsiveness that is so clearly a hallmark of Premier League Primary Stars targeted interventions. However, some felt that data collection and KPIs failed to reflect this flexible approach.

6.4 Sharing and spreading what works



“There are so many great things happening. You see a tweet, but in terms of accessing what people have done, we don’t do enough. There’s a lot of wasted time, with people reinventing the wheel.”

(Premier League Primary Stars Manager, Palace for Life Foundation)

We came across countless examples of impressive targeted interventions, often falling under the broad umbrella of PSHE, which have been designed and successfully developed by CCOs. Some of these are included as vignettes in [Appendix 3](#). CCOs are clearly very keen to share their experiences and to learn from what others are doing, but opportunities to do this are limited (particularly during the pandemic, when CCOs were unable to meet face to face).

While the central team has a good overview of CCO activity, the diversity we have described means that it is hard to keep track of developments and to build a dynamic and evolving picture of what works.



7. Premier League Primary Stars Impacts and Benefits

This section of the report shares examples of the range of impacts and benefits experienced as a result of Premier League Primary Stars delivery at a local level. These findings focus on those impacts relating to the questions set for the evaluation team including:

1. Which of the targeted interventions (PSHE, maths, English, extra-curricular and SEND-specific interventions) is contributing most to the vision and objectives of the Premier League Primary Stars programme?
2. Which interventions provide the most value to schools and their pupils?
3. Which are most important in supporting pupils who are underachieving?
4. Which are most successful in developing and improving the mental and physical wellbeing of programme participants?
5. What elements/factors make up the core components of successful programme delivery?
6. Are there particular benefits when the programme elements are delivered by teachers, when by coaches and when by non CCO partners?
7. How successfully are the Premier League values embedded in lessons and learning through targeted interventions?

7.1 Which targeted interventions contribute the most? What have we learned about children's engagement and improvement in learning?

"It's all about making them confident individuals, happy at school, which makes them better learners."

(Head teacher, South London)

This question maps onto the programme outcomes relating to feeling inspired and engaged, the development of skills and knowledge, improved attendance and improved attainment.

Across different data sources and examples from CCOs and schools, we have found consistent evidence that children's engagement in learning has improved as a result of the targeted interventions they have experienced. Their enhanced

motivation to learn is clearly linked to their enjoyment of targeted intervention sessions, and it is also evident that improvements have been achieved for significant numbers of children participating in these lessons – most noticeably in maths and English, and in reading in particular.

“A child who received the intervention in year 3 – [whose] attendance was poor and was a reluctant writer, working below age related expectations – is now in year 5 working at age related expectations for writing, has improved handwriting and fluency and is also around 95% attendance.”
(NDTi Schools’ Survey)

CCOs data show before and after improvements for maths and English, and some schools are also able to share their own data illustrating improved attainment. For example, the percentage of children with SEND who are actively reading before and after the Premier League Reading Stars intervention. Club Doncaster Foundation and two of their schools have shared before and after percentages of children in year 5 who are actively reading, with one school reporting an increase from an average of 9.52% of pupils actively reading to an average of 16.6% as a result of a 10-week intervention. Another school, working with Club Doncaster Foundation, examined the percentage of children with SEND participating in at least six after school sessions a year. They found that these were substantially higher than anticipated, with 59% of year 1 children with additional needs participating in sessions, 69% in year 2, 41% in year 3, 33% in year 4, 73% in year 5 and 38% in year 6.

Example

Burton Albion Community Trust (BACT) launched their Premier League Maths Stars programme in River View Primary School during the last academic year. The school is located in one of East Staffordshire’s most deprived wards, and with 357 pupils is larger than the average primary school. Following consultation with the school, it was decided that maths was an area to focus on as the school’s progress score was -2.7 (which is below the average score for primary schools in East Staffordshire at -0.7). Only 51% of pupils were meeting expected standards in maths, which is below the national and LA average of 65%. BACT adapted the programme resources in maths to engage pupils in creative and tailored ways, often outside the classroom involving physical activity and breaking up tasks.

Mia* was one of the pupils selected as she was a reluctant learner in maths and struggled to engage in classroom-based lessons. Following the intervention, Mia's maths score increased from 80 to 114 meaning she is now within the 11% of pupils nationally achieving at a higher standard. The average standardised score for the whole group who participated improved from 88 (below the national average of 100) to 104. The School's Headteacher, Mandy Whitehouse was even more impressed by the positive change in attitude following the programme:

"The most amazing impact we had is their behaviour towards maths. The children that were selected were reluctant maths learners, now most of them enjoy taking part in maths lessons and that's a skill that will stay with them for a long time".

**All names of children have been changed*

7.2 Which interventions provide the most value to schools and their pupils and why?

"The children can have difficult homes. Instilling confidence is important. The opportunity to go to Palace, on to the pitch, it's about status and money." (Head teacher, South London)

Whilst we did not examine the economic value of targeted interventions for schools, we did explore which aspects of Premier League Primary Stars delivery achieved the greatest benefits for school staff and children.

For children and schools, the evidence shows that the flexible and diverse range of PSHE interventions delivered has increased understanding of complex social issues (e.g., racism, disability, equality and inclusion), enabled personal skills development and growth, and facilitated positive changes in behaviour. For example, Chelsea FC Foundation deliver a 6-week PSHE intervention on equality and diversity to a wide range of local primary schools. Session topics include: an introduction to equality and diversity, celebrating differences and similarities, understanding religion and symbols, identifying role models, disability awareness, and racism and discrimination in sport (see [Appendix 3. Vignettes](#), for further information).

Schools and CCO's both comment that PSHE interventions have enabled and engaged children in creative and person-centred ways which have a ripple effect to other aspects of their learning including more academic subjects.

Example

During a whole class Aspirations PSHE project, Chloe* participated in sessions in which she discussed her own attributes highlighting her strengths and development areas. With her confidence growing in every lesson, she grew more and more into the sessions making some insightful contributions to a lesson around leadership/role models and the importance of community when trying to achieve common goals. Her teacher said:

“The Cambridge United PSHE Aspirations and maths sessions have had an extremely positive impact on Chloe. She is now more confident in her learning but particularly in maths. She actively joins in during maths lessons and confidently works in small groups or is happy to share her ideas with the whole class. Her engagement with the PSHE Aspirations sessions have also given her increased focus, confidence, and engagement in all areas of learning”.

*All names of children have been changed

Children consistently share how different they feel as a result of their involvement in Premier League Primary Stars sessions and most importantly through their interaction with CCO coaches:

“(Coach) inspires me because he makes me feel calm and good at stuff.” (Premier League Primary Stars participant, Year 3, South London)

At the heart of these experiences are the strong relationships that develop between coaches and children, and between coaches and schools. As a result of these relationships (explored further in [section 5](#), above), it is clear that mutual respect and trust is fostered which brings a number of benefits for CCOs and schools alike. As noted above, 100% of CCOs and schools responding to the NDTi schools and CCO surveys reported that they have a good relationship.

7.3 Which interventions are most important in supporting pupils that are underachieving?

The most important elements in supporting all pupils, especially those deemed to be underachieving, are the ways in which targeted interventions are tailored and then delivered to meet the needs of individual children, as well as taking account of the needs of all children in particular years/schools. Whilst some interventions are clearly effective in increasing engagement in and facilitating

improvements in learning (as illustrated above), the common enabling factors are the relationships, style and approach taken by coaches and CCOs. This is explored further in [section 5](#), above.

One stand-out feature is the emphasis in all delivery on “learning through stealth” - a common focus on making lessons active, interactive and fun so that children do not realise that they are learning:

98% of children enjoyed the Targeted Interventions.
(NDTi schools' survey)

This was found to be particularly important for children who are not engaging in, or are struggling with, their learning, as Freddie's story illustrates:

Freddie's* story

Before engaging in Premier League Primary Stars activity, Freddie had displayed challenging behaviours within school and was disengaged from learning. As a result, he would spend a large percentage of time out of class or excluded from school which would have a detrimental effect on his education.....As a result, he would quite often find himself isolated from his peers and find making friends a challenge.

However, once taking part in Premier League Primary Stars supported PE lessons, Freddie formed positive relationships with the coaches, allowing them to mentor him and provide advice to help him improve in school. As a result, when Freddie was facing situations where he would get frustrated, he would actively try and seek advice from the Foundation coaches in an attempt to de-escalate the situation, resulting in fewer reports of him being rude to teachers or aggressive to other pupils. Freddie also increased his engagement and enjoyment in attending academic lessons involving Swindon Town coaches, which was highlighted in the PO2 participant questionnaires which he completed. Freddie said: **“Thursdays are the best part of the school week as I get to work with Swindon Town!”**.

*All names of children have been changed

7.4 Which interventions are most successful in developing and improving the mental and physical wellbeing of programme participants?

There are numerous examples and case studies from CCOs and schools showing improvements in children's mental and physical health as a result of

their involvement in different targeted interventions (for a selection of case studies and change stories [click here](#)). These improvements are not always easily captured and/or measured consistently with existing programme tools (for example, the number of different questions relating to outcomes about mental health compared to other outcome areas).

Stories and case studies, however, are a valid source of evidence and demonstrate improvements in both physical health (Bailey's story below) and mental health and wellbeing (Lego Therapy below).

Bailey's* story

During the first lockdown period, Ed Garnett (one of the Premier League Primary Stars coaches working with schools from Leicester City in the City (LCitC) began to work with Bailey, a year 6 pupil, on a daily basis. Bailey was overweight and struggled to get motivated to take part in sport. However, he loved watching and playing football, which was a key hook for engaging him. Due to his weight, everyday tasks had started to become difficult for Bailey, such as climbing up the stairs to get to class every day. Ed worked closely with school staff to support Bailey and to achieve his own goal for losing weight. He worked with Bailey four times a week for 30 minutes each session, to increase his physical activity, as follows:

Mondays – chat about the weekend (usually football results!) alongside passing and shooting

Tuesdays – “recreate a famous LCFC goal” or one from that weekend. Bailey is a great Leicester city fan and responded positively to this idea and could compare his goal to the actual goals scored.

Thursdays – mini-match with friends from class, supporting Bailey's social skills and allowing him to enjoy being active with others in a supportive environment.

Fridays – multi-sports selected from cricket/tennis/badminton/basketball, to work different parts of his body, teach him new skills and create new interests.

Over the course of these sessions, Bailey's attainment in PE improved significantly and he lost 6 pounds! His motivation and attitude towards being active also significantly improved, and his attitude changed from a relatively negative one to a positive one.

Bailey's teacher says: **“He's keen on making sure he does his 10,000 steps every day and just wanting to be a lot more active throughout the day. He's**

started to walk home on his own now whereas before he was picked up by his dad in the car all of the time”.

LCitC “are really proud of what Bailey has achieved. He has worked incredibly hard with both the school and Ed. As he is going to secondary school next academic year, we plan to help him with his transition by inviting him to enrichment and transition sessions over the summer”.

*All names of children have been changed

Creative and flexible approaches to adapting targeted interventions help ensure that children’s specific needs are met, including better mental health, increased self-esteem and confidence. For example, Chelsea FC Foundation and Churchill Gardens Academy worked together to explore ways of meeting the needs of three pupils who were struggling with their behaviour and concentration and were also having various family issues. They realised that the children struggled to focus in the classroom, found it difficult to communicate with others and did not like to follow instructions. They tried Lego Therapy, which the children loved. Their class teacher commented that:

“Lego Therapy with coach Victor has been extremely helpful in helping to motivate the children in the group, help them focus, take turns, work together, and provide them with a structured yet engaging way to express themselves, verbally and through their creative (Lego) builds. They look forward to it every week”.

One of the children commented:

“I really enjoy doing the Lego and I really liked being the builder. I am trying my best to use my words more”.

7.5 What elements/factors make up the core components of successful programme delivery?

Evidence from fieldwork interviews and observations, change stories and case studies highlights the following three features that help to shape successful programme delivery:

- **The skills, passions, and flexibility of coaches/delivery teams:** as the CCO survey indicated, the unique blend of skills and dedication of the coaches' delivering sessions is a consistent and primary factor in the successful delivery of targeted interventions. This unique blend includes how Premier League Primary Stars resources are adapted alongside tried and tested methods of delivery to meet specific individual and local needs, whilst bringing both classroom and outdoor learning skills together using the interpersonal qualities of individual coaches. We were constantly impressed by this unique mix of skills and talents and the positive feedback both from schools and children alike.

“Children are all really positive, really love the coaches and engage well with the learning. Excited and enthusiastic about when [coach] is in school – you can see it.”

(Deputy Headteacher, Bristol)

- **The community role and position of CCOs and host football clubs:** being rooted in the diverse communities where partner schools are situated means that both CCOs and schools are uniquely placed to understand and respond to the wide range of local and individual needs. They are also well placed, as a result of their local status and pride, to focus on key messages and education around inclusion, creating opportunities for participation for young people who may not otherwise have access to those chances or benefit from a different approach to learning. This finding chimes with one of the critical enablers from the PLCF Theory of Change, namely that “Clubs have unique connections and platforms within communities”.

Astrea Atlas School in Doncaster completed their first year as part of the Premier League Primary Stars programme in 2021-22. During this time their PE lead brought in as many different partners from the local community as possible to encourage pupils to engage in sport, including watching local football games. Club Doncaster was their main partner. “We liked the whole package they provided and the fact they used incentives like free season tickets to engage the children e.g., in after school clubs. Together we’re aiming for behavioural change.”

- **The quality and accessibility of Premier League Primary Stars resources, and how they are adapted to meet local needs:** the school and CCO surveys, fieldwork interviews and conversations all highlighted the high quality of the Premier League Primary Stars resources, while CCOs appreciated their ability to customise these for local use.

“The resources on the Premier League Primary Stars website are good, the videos are really good, there’s assemblies and assembly PowerPoints that you can tweak and supportive videos.” (Headteacher, Bristol)

Responses to the CCO survey underlined consistent themes, in particular the importance of the skills and interpersonal qualities of the coaches, as well as the availability and use of high-quality resources as key components of successful programme delivery. The survey also highlighted two additional components: the relationship between schools and CCOs (see [section 5](#)), and schools selecting appropriate students for specific targeted interventions.

7.6 Are there particular benefits when the programme elements are delivered by teachers, when by coaches and when by non CCO partners?

Building on the above point, the most important aspect of the coaches' collective and individual make-up is their **style of engagement** that lies at the heart of their relationship with the children who participate in the targeted interventions. Children consistently share how much fun these sessions are, how they feel seen and understood by the coaches, and how this helps them engage in and improve their learning. There was wide agreement, among CCO staff and schools, that coaches relate to children in a different way to their teachers. The **'power of the badge'** is one element of this but alongside the badge, CCO staff work in a less formal way with children, often in small groups or one to one, and use creative, active approaches to learning.

***"We're in our kit, the children call us by our first name.
We're by their shoulder."***

(Lead coach, Palace for Life Foundation)

***"He is the best coach for us, and he does lots
of stuff that is fun and nice."*** (Premier League
Primary Stars participant, Yr 3, South London)

The projects that CCO's have developed with external partners often target complex social issues and/or local needs, often under the umbrella of PSHE targeted interventions. These partnership projects often lead to important, unexpected impacts. For example, Planet League, highlighted above, work with 70 CCOs. Planet League monitor the action that schools, and children, are taking, which they have to evidence so that Planet League can verify the data. Planet League then convert this into the carbon impact for each area or school. In Burnley, for example, children taking part in the Premier League Primary Stars programme have taken action that has saved nine tons of CO₂, which is the equivalent of planting 529 trees.

For Planet League, CCOs are essential to the way they work and the impact they have:

“Would this have happened without Primary Stars? Not a chance! None of it would have happened without the (CCOs). It’s core to our impact.” (Planet League)

Similarly, the GULP programme (described earlier), which also depended on CCOs as delivery partners, is making a difference to children’s attitudes towards, and consumption of, fizzy drinks:

“The children achieved 16.1 days sugary drink free with 95% of participants achieving a minimum of 10 days sugary drink free.” (GULP Evaluation Report, 2021)

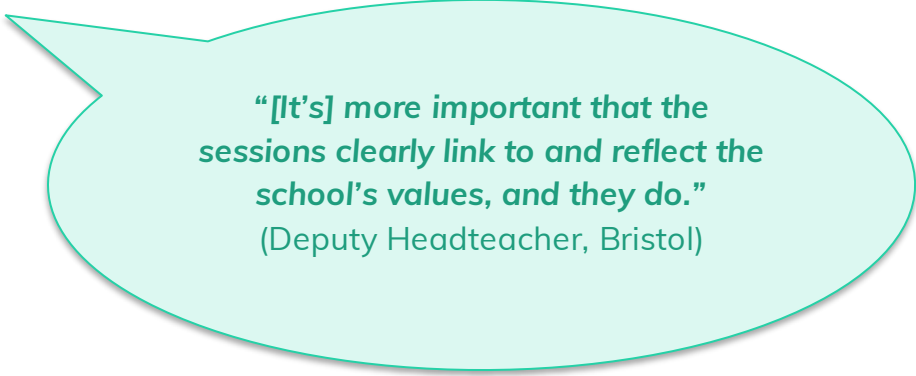
GULP’s evaluation found that the relationship with CCOs was core to its impact:

“Our analysis suggests that the GULP Lancashire project was greatly enhanced through its association with sport and physical activity and delivery of the programme by community sports coaches.” (GULP Evaluation report, 2021)

7.7 How successfully are the Premier League values embedded in lessons and learning through targeted interventions?

Premier League and schools’ values are clearly embedded and reflected in all aspects of programme design and delivery. This is an ambition of the whole programme but is clearly of fundamental importance to individual CCO’s across the country. This consideration is reflected in the careful design and focus on values in specific topics (e.g., [No Room For Racism](#)) and how each intervention and lesson is delivered. For example, Chelsea FC Foundation have embedded the Premier League’s values and equality and diversity standards within their bespoke PSHE offer that the Foundation has developed as part of its programme: ‘this [focus] promotes questioning around inclusion across everything we do’ (see also [Appendix 3, Vignettes](#)).

Schools also emphasise the importance of synergy between the Premier League values and their own, individual school values. This alignment underpins the success of many of the long-term relationships that have developed over time, between CCOs and their partner schools.



“[It’s] more important that the sessions clearly link to and reflect the school’s values, and they do.”
(Deputy Headteacher, Bristol)



8. Bringing it all together: common themes & key messages

This final section summarises our final headlines, sets out the 'top tips' for successful delivery of targeted interventions, as identified by CCOs themselves, and finally makes some suggestions for the development priorities for the future, for PLCF, for CCOs and for all who are involved in Premier League Primary Stars.

8.1 Summary headlines

Premier League Primary Stars is a phenomenal programme that is making a **difference to significant numbers of children** across the country through its targeted interventions alongside a myriad of other features and offers designed to meet local needs.

- It is a huge, complex, and diverse programme delivered by 105 CCOs, that has grown and evolved over time since its launch in 2016. Responsiveness is a fundamentally important characteristic of the programme, both to external events such as the Covid 19 pandemic, as well as to the unique circumstances of individual schools and communities.
- Children's engagement in learning has improved as a result of the targeted interventions they experience. Their enhanced motivation to learn is clearly linked to their enjoyment of these sessions and they have shown significant improvements in maths and English and reading in particular.
- The flexible and diverse range of PSHE interventions delivered have also increased children's understanding of complex social issues (e.g., racism, disability, equality and inclusion), enabled personal skills development and growth, and facilitated positive changes in behaviour.
- All targeted interventions can be bespoke to some extent, and in the case of PSHE, the definition has become sufficiently elastic to accommodate an enormous range of interventions covering topics from equality and diversity to rail safety. Although targeted interventions cover a very wide range of topics and activities, it is clear that the Premier League values lie at the heart of all that is delivered.

At the heart of these experiences are the **strong relationships that develop between coaches and children, and between coaches and schools**. As a result of

these relationships, mutual respect and trust is fostered which brings a number of benefits for CCOs and schools alike.

- CCOs prioritise building positive relationships with schools, which is clearly paying off – our survey found that 100% of schools had a good relationship with their CCO.
- Good relationships with schools have several different aspects, including preparing the ground well, agreeing mutual expectations, building relationships at every level, becoming embedded in the school team and sharing information.
- Coaches have a different kind of relationship with children, which relies on an informal working style, understanding children as individuals and enabling children's voices to be heard.
- There is an opportunity to develop relationships with parents further.
- Delivery partnerships with other organisations can involve either delivering **alongside** others, or **on behalf** of others. Partners are consistently positive about the skills and responsiveness of CCO staff.

A small number of **common challenges** are experienced in the organisation and delivery of targeted interventions, and other components of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. Some of these are best addressed at the local level, for example building on the good relationships that exist between CCOs, schools and wider partners. Others would benefit from creative problem solving across CCO's, which we explore further in [section 8.3](#) below.

- Schools (and sometimes children) can see the role of CCOs as being exclusively about sport and do not appreciate the full scope of what they can offer.
- The capacity of both schools and some CCOs is under pressure, which means that it is harder to build the kind of positive relationship upon which targeted interventions depend, as described earlier.
- A focus on KPIs can create perverse incentives for CCOs and data collection methods do not reflect the flexibility of the programme.
- There is a danger that CCOs are reinventing wheels, as there are few systematic ways of capturing and sharing learning within the programme.

8.2 Top tips

As part of the evaluation, we asked CCOs for their hints, tips and advice for others. The responses were very consistent and are set out below.

Top Tips for CCOs from CCOs

1. Your insight and understanding about local needs are key: *focus on local needs as much as possible.*
2. Building relationships and holding information sessions with schools to develop a shared understanding about the issues and what both parties bring to effective delivery: *'knock till your knuckles are blue!'*
3. Look at the school's Development Plan, values and policies so you can *align values and ensure you are working within the ethos and policies of the school.*
4. Education for CCO staff so they are comfortable with delivery of sessions. For example, confidence in using certain terms and language, making sure coaches are familiar and confident so they can then support children and teachers to be the same.
5. Holding meetings and pre-meetings with schools and teachers before delivery begins. *Work out how to make it work well in each school, on a school by school basis. Do we need parental consent? Are there any specific cultural issues or history that are relevant?*
6. Use coaches known to schools / children to deliver the programme. Use the power of the badge, the Club/CCO "Magic Dust" to role model being safe and making safe choices.
7. Get to know the children as individuals, their likes, dislikes, what they struggle with - *it's about trying to understand the children and then using a combination of delivery approaches that appeal to different children.*
8. Data is key: *make time for reflection and act on feedback. Be open to any and all feedback.*
9. Keep an open mind about who you partner with: Network Rail! *Who'd have thought it?!*
10. *This is an easy programme to deliver for CCOs: let's spread the offer and get more CCOs and schools involved across the country.*
11. *Finally - You won't get it right all of the time, that's ok! Keep going anyway.*

8.3 Lessons & priorities for the future

Looking to the future - priorities and actions (for PLCF)

- The PLCF provide CCOs with considerable support in their delivery of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. **This support needs to be maintained and flexed** as the programme grows and evolves which will necessitate a more **collaborative form of support**.
- Throughout this report we have highlighted the incredible range of work that is happening across CCOs with examples of bespoke and innovative programme delivery, positive relationships with schools, parents, children and partners and effective methods for capturing impact. The PLCF has **a facilitative role** to play in **supporting CCOs to share and learn what works** as well as **supporting the spread of great initiatives**.
- The PLCF needs to **develop flexible, streamlined methods to capture what the Premier League Primary Stars programme, and the targeted interventions, are achieving**. This requires **revisiting the charity's Theory of Change**; to strip back what is not working and to emphasise outcomes. It also means **abandoning inflexible approaches that are no longer fit for purpose** and ensuring that the methods used to measure outcomes are measuring what they are intended to measure. Additional approaches which are more child-friendly, easy to use and incorporate technology should be considered.
- We highlighted a number of dilemmas at the end of [section 3](#) which need to be addressed by the PLCF. One dilemma was around data collection and achieving outcomes, highlighted above. The other dilemmas were concerned with quantity versus quality and long-term relationships with schools versus recruiting lots of new schools. Adopting a collaborative approach with CCOs to resolving these dilemmas would be useful.

Looking to the future - priorities and actions (for CCOs/all)

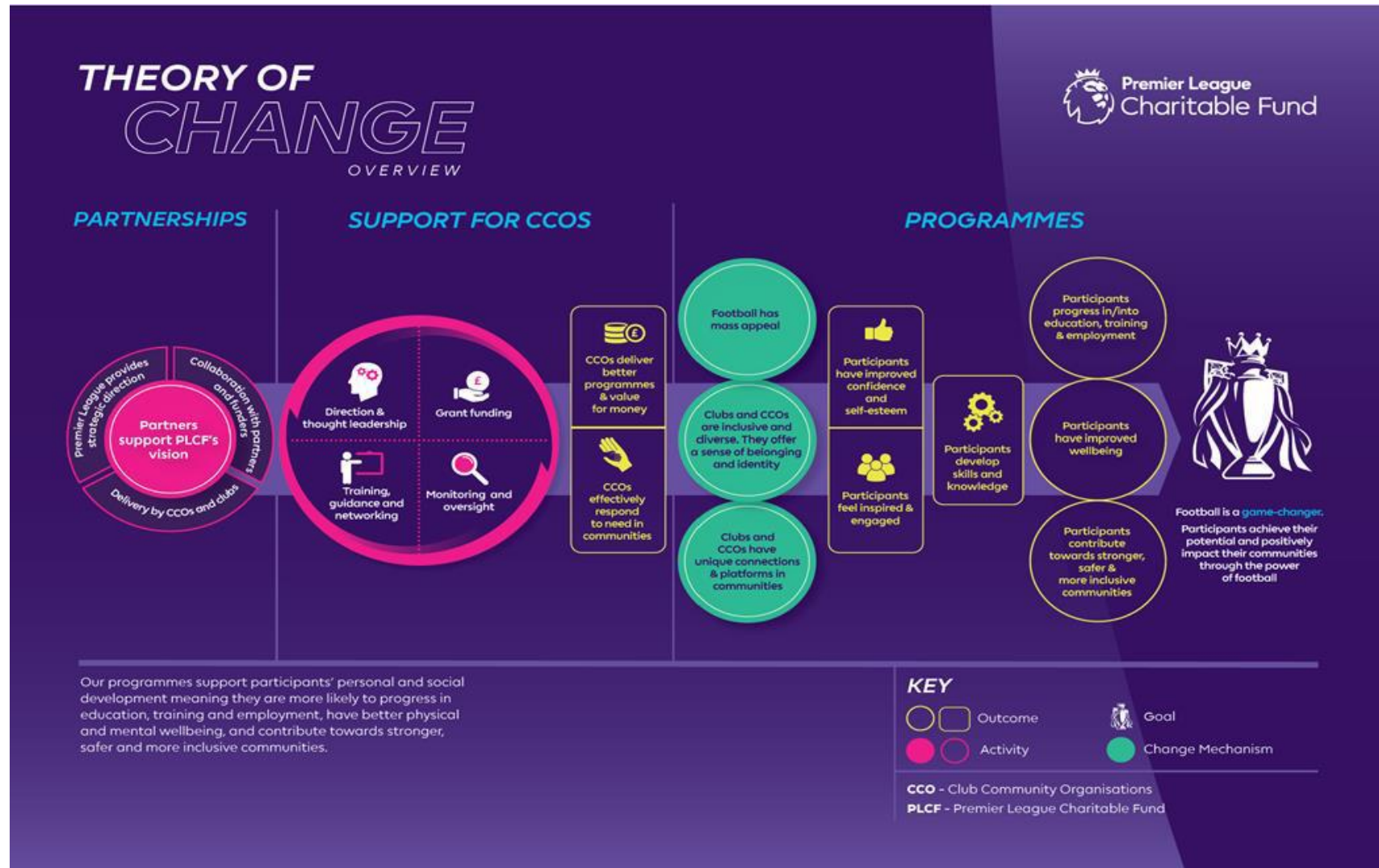
- Premier League Primary Stars is a phenomenal programme that is making a difference to significant numbers of children therefore, **you need to keep on doing what you are doing**. Although the targeted interventions are varied, bespoke and, in the case of PSHE, increasingly elastic **focusing on the Premier League values as guiding principles** provides the glue for a coherent programme. Also, successful long-term relationships between schools and CCOs can be developed when the Premier League values are aligned with individual school values.
- There is considerable local flexibility and responsiveness across the CCOs as they deliver a programme which takes into account individual schools

and children's needs. Again, this **local flexibility and responsiveness should be maintained**.

- With the supportive encouragement of coaches, children's voices are heard within the delivery of the programme. However, CCOs can learn from each other and **develop ways to systematically incorporate children's voices into programme design**. They should also work together and **explore ways of engaging with parents**.
- Many CCOs work in partnership with other specialist organisations to deliver some elements of the targeted interventions and some of these have been highlighted in this report. CCOs and the PLCF should remain open to new partnerships and possibilities. This requires everyone working together **to identify fellow travellers as well as new income streams**. This means identifying other organisations with shared goals and values and working together to develop joint projects. This can in turn open up new sources of funding, as the example of GULP (page 35) shows.
- The heartbeat of the programme is the work of the skilled coaches and delivery teams across the CCOs. **The central role coaches and delivery teams play should be acknowledged and celebrated**. However, **capacity is an issue for some CCOs who are struggling to recruit and retain coaching staff**. Finding ways to combat this would seem a priority to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the programme.
- The full scope of the Premier League Primary Stars programme and what CCOs can offer is not fully understood and appreciated by schools. **CCOs and the PLCF should work together to strengthen the messaging about the Premier League Primary Stars programme**. There are two ways this can be achieved:
 - Describe the offer, core and bespoke.
 - Report back to each school. Short individual impact reports are offered to individual schools by some CCOs. This could be a development opportunity for all CCOs supported by the PLCF.
- **Use the questions in the Reflection Framework** we have developed **to reflect on, and review success, going forward** ([See Appendix 5](#)).
- **Celebrate success with confidence and pride – shout from the rooftops about how great you are, and the difference the Premier League Primary Stars programme is making to children's' lives!**

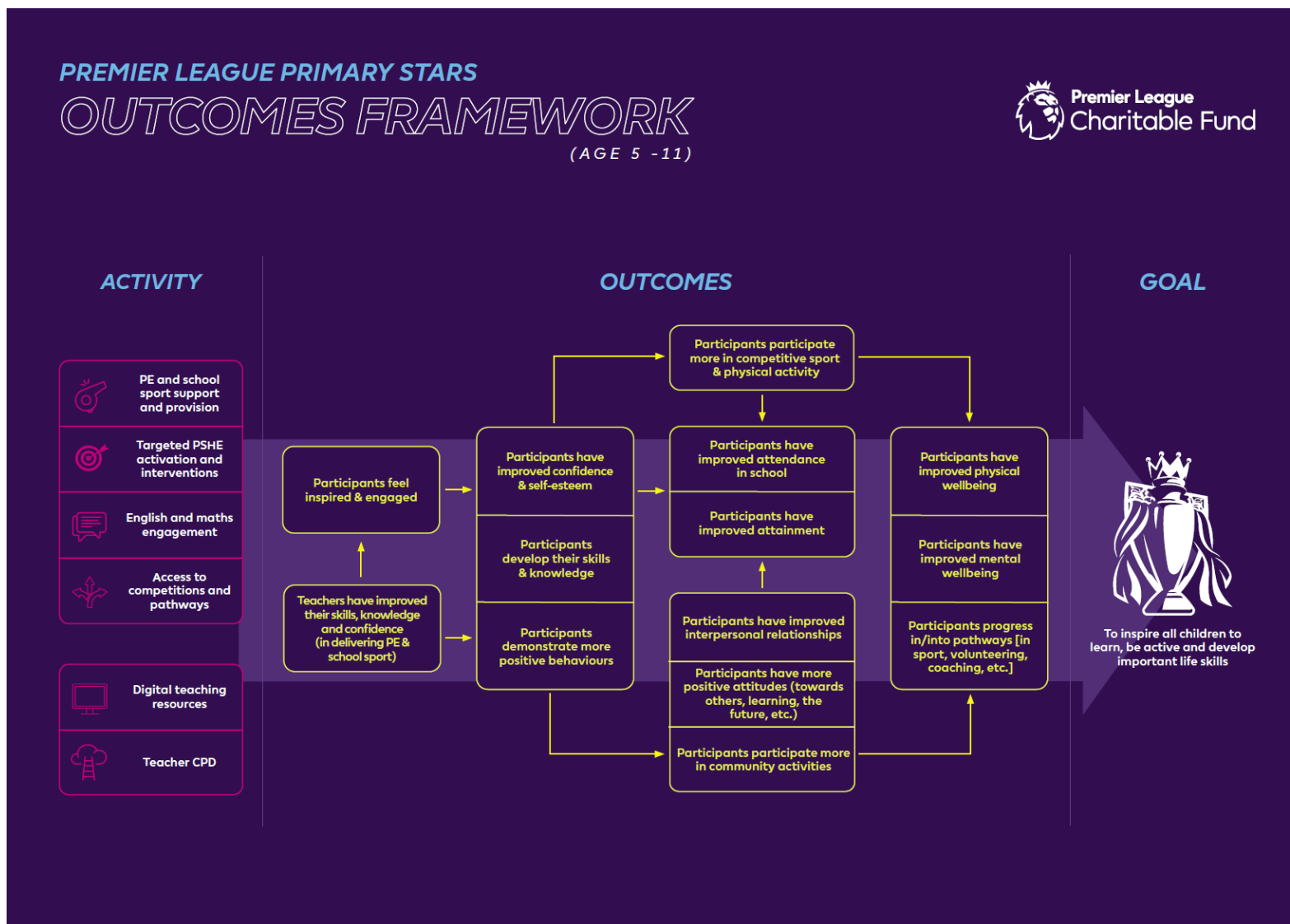


Appendix 1. Theory of Change





Appendix 2. Outcomes Framework





Appendix 3. Vignettes

Albion in the Community

Using data and evidence to improve delivery and showcase success

What was the issue?

“The most impactful programmes had the least worthwhile data. The right measurements were not in place.”

When a new Data Manager arrived at Albion in the Community (AIRC) four years ago, they spent the first six months looking at:

- What AIRC collected.
- Why they collected it.
- What they did with it.

Part of the context was that funders were starting to shift their focus and were becoming increasingly interested in qualitative evidence. But the charity was aware that they had prioritised this for further development.

They found that data collection was primarily about reporting back activity to funders and that there was some work to be done on reporting more qualitative data.

What did they do about it?

In response to their review, AIRC developed a new approach, with a strong focus on culture change and using evidence to shape and improve delivery, as set out below.

- They have developed a **three year data and impact strategy**. This is very clear about the purpose of data collection:
 - Measuring Impact.
 - Performance Management.
 - Shaping future delivery and social value.
 - Telling a story.
- AIRC produces annual **review reports for each school**, drawing together data on participants, surveys, plus feedback from children and teachers, and case studies, presented attractively and accessibly (see example page, below).

- Each year they carry out a deep dive into the data for each programme, summarise this in a slide set and use it as the starting point for an **Insight Meeting** with the programme lead. The conversation focuses on development and action and shines a light on questions such as why dropout rates might be increasing for some programmes.
- Insight meetings are followed up with a discussion at the Senior Management Team (SMT), which helps to build **senior ownership** through exploring challenges and jointly developing solutions together.

What now/so what?

“It’s great for managers to showcase what they’re doing and great for SMT so they can understand what programmes deliver. Managers feel more supported now, it’s not just their problem.”

The Insight Meetings have helped to embed a greater understanding of the role of data and evidence in improving delivery right across AITC. SMT engagement in this process has been key.

Alongside continuing the approach described above, their future plans include:

- Trialling **voting software** to make pre/post intervention questionnaires easier to administer and analyse.
- Strengthening work on **children’s voice**.
- **Linking data** to follow children’s progress over time and potentially looking at the impact on whole families.
- Rolling out work on the **social value** of AITC’s work, with the methodology to be trialled with one programme shortly.

“I’m passionate about what we do and how we evaluate it.”



Note: This data is consolidated across all our Premier League Reading Stars delivery this year based on the outcomes from our Autumn schools.

Burton Albion Foundation and Network Rail Partnership

Background

Burton Albion Community Trust (BACT) work with approximately 30-35 schools and have a core group of 10-15 primary schools that they work with serving a diverse range of suburban and rural communities across the two Local Authorities of Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Their newer offers to this core group of schools have been under the PSHE umbrella including a specific focus on rail safety and improving well-being.

What was the issue and what did they do?

BACT was approached by Network Rail in 2019/20 through their community engagement lead, with the idea of working together to deliver presentations on rail safety in schools. The original plan was that Network Rail provided the resources and the CCO would broker engagement and involvement from schools. When the first Covid-19 lockdown hit in March 2020, Network Rail sent the resources to BACT who adapted them to create a 6-week programme based on a mix of classroom learning and practical sessions. This ran as a pilot for one year during 2020-21, following which the CCO reviewed the offer which they hope to run again as part of their menu of PSHE targeted interventions.

Each of the Rail Safety sessions involves 30-45 minutes in class followed by 45 minutes of outdoor games focusing on railway and level crossing safety. Both elements include quizzes, practical activities and discussions around topics as varied as risk, decision-making, peer pressure and making safe choices. The pilot deliberately targeted schools based near railways for years 5 and 6.

The 6-week programme covered:

- Increasing awareness around rail safety and equipping children with knowledge to make safe choices.
- Increasing confidence and understanding the dangers so children make the right decisions.
- Managing and avoiding peer pressure.

At the end of the pilot, BACT reviewed their Premier League Primary Stars programme data and gathered feedback from participating schools. This data showed that both teachers and children found the programme beneficial, with positive responses from the children who liked the quizzes and competitive elements of the programme as a way into learning about what might otherwise be a dry subject.

They discovered that the children didn't know as much as they thought they did about keeping safe and making decisions about risk; and that their parents

were not as aware or confident about some of the key ways to keep safe around railways and level crossings:

“This meant they were risk averse so had been telling their children to avoid the railway – which doesn’t help them build up the confidence or knowledge to be safe.”

The feedback also showed the benefit of this programme being delivered by the CCO rather than Network Rail or the school; children engaged with the coaches and loved the practical elements and outdoor games. ‘It’s cool to be safe’ was a key message and the coaches were able to role model this for the children as they do on other public health programmes (e.g., healthy eating).

BACT found that the time they spent adapting the Network Rail resources was key, breaking up complex messages and safety statistics into weekly themes involving classroom based and practical lessons.

“A positive approach is key; we want to arm the kids with the knowledge to be safe and avoid dangers. Make it relatable.”

What now/what next?

The plan now is to build in more discussion and practical elements that focus on wellbeing and decision making so that children feel secure in making decisions around risk and keeping safe.

This bespoke Rail Safety offer is part of BACT’s schools’ brochure for the current academic year (2022-23), although they feel that engagement will depend on how close the school /school route is to the railway. As a result, they are targeting these specific schools for this year. They also plan to develop a booklet as a takeaway for the children who participate - *share your learning with your parents, teach your mum and dad to be safe!*

Tips from Burton Albion Community Trust for other CCOs

- Know and understand the local needs, what’s going on, what are the local features to connect with and use?
- Use coaches known to schools / children to deliver the programme. Use the power of the badge and the skills of coaches to role model being safe and making safe choices.
- This is an easy programme to deliver for CCOs: *let’s spread the offer and get more CCOs and schools involved across the country.*
- Keep an open mind about who you partner with: Network Rail! Who’d have thought it?!

Capturing and using evidence to showcase impact

What was the issue?

1. They wanted to make sure they were using a range of data collection tools to ensure that a complete picture of impact could be gained from multiple voices, including delivery staff as often their voice is missing.
2. They wanted to use evidence to inform practice in schools and support the development of a long-term relationship with schools.

What did they do about it?

1. They decided to capture evidence, 'triangulate' data and showcase impact through storytelling and producing short videos. They use data from the pre and post questionnaires and interviews with the coach, the child/children, the teacher, and parent to tell a story of the impact that an intervention is having.
2. They looked at the tools they were using, the pre and post questionnaires, to see how they might be used differently. They decided that waiting until the post-questionnaire was administered to look at progress was a wasted opportunity, so they decided to analyse the pre-questionnaires and use the analysis as an opportunity to ensure that what they were delivering fitted the needs of the school and children. From this they developed a cycle of implementation that they use with all schools that they work with.

What now/so what?

1. They work with a production company to produce short, impactful videos incorporating the voices of all those involved. Example:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLbaryWjG1E>
2. The Cycle of Implementation:
 - a. Conversation with school - 'What key outcomes are you looking to achieve?'
 - b. CCO offers programmes specific to the needs of the school.
 - c. The school identifies pupils that would most benefit from the provision.
 - d. CCO administers pre-questionnaire and analyses pre-responses to shape planning.
 - e. CCO delivers 6+ week programme.
 - f. CCO collects data from participants, teacher/school staff, CCO staff.

- g. Video made/case study written up and impact shared with school.
This leads to future programmes discussed and the cycle repeats.

In addition, they also look at the school's School Development Plan, values and behaviour management policy so they can align the Premier League values with the school's values and confirm needs to ensure they are working within the ethos and policies of the school.

Premier League Primary Stars leading the way in race equality

Background

S is the Schools Education Manager at Chelsea FC Foundation where they oversee their work with schools, ensuring the Foundations' commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is embedded in all its programmes including the delivery of Premier League Primary Stars targeted interventions.

Chelsea FC Foundation see their PSHE targeted interventions as the bedrock of their work in schools, taking huge pride in both what they do and the ways in which this commitment to EDI is central to delivery in schools.

What was the issue, and what did they do?

This commitment to embedding an EDI approach stems from the club's previous *Building Bridges* Campaign, which was a campaign designed to promote equality, celebrate diversity, and promote inclusion throughout the club, stadium and wider community.

The Club and Foundation have worked together since then, bringing in the skills and expertise of partner organisations to shape a collaborative offer for local schools to build strong, respectful community and individual relationships. The approach spans the Club and Foundation, but there is a focus on the Foundation's work because of their involvement in, and relationship with, local schools.

This broader programme of work has informed how the Foundation delivers all of its school-based programmes including Premier League Primary Stars. At the same time, the Premier League's values and equality and diversity standards are embedded within the bespoke PSHE offer that the Foundation has developed as part of its programme: *'this [focus] promotes questioning around inclusion across everything we do'*

A key driver has been the huge diversity locally both in terms of ethnicity and economically, including the immediate area surrounding Stamford Bridge. Knowing the local needs, using intelligence about local communities, and understanding the issues facing young people and families have been key to the CCO's success in developing a locally relevant offer. The whole spectrum of needs and diversity of backgrounds is reflected within the schools the Foundation covers, as well as within the individual classes that they work with. The CCO's PSHE offer focuses, in particular, on building mutual understanding about the children's widely differing backgrounds and circumstances.

The CCO has an ED&I focus group which meets every few months, to reflect and learn from what's going on in local schools and what's come up in specific sessions. This informs wider learning and development for the Foundation and especially the targeted interventions they deliver. They have created a number of programmes under their EDI umbrella, basing some of these around key events in the calendar such as Black History Month in September/October exploring issues such as what does this mean to me and what does this to all of us?

What Now/So What?

A total of 112 assemblies covering these issues and themes were delivered across the schools that Chelsea FC Foundation work with during 2020 alone. Sessions were delivered on each of the black players, male and female, that have represented the club professionally – these were through assemblies and classroom sessions. The Foundation selects the schools they engage and work with on these topics, and then match specific issues identified by the school with particular players from the Club. They use these opportunities to identify and celebrate local heroes within schools - children who epitomize and reflect the Foundation's EDI values - and work with them to build their self-esteem, pride, and aspirations for their own and their peers' futures.

Over the last two years, 40 heroes across 20 schools have participated in this programme. They experience a 6-week intervention including sessions in the classroom and at the Club, during which they explore racial and ethnic stereotyping and collaborate to develop a performance to share what they have learned, hosted at the Stadium which families and teachers are invited to watch.

Other strands to this multi-faceted programme include the Club and CCO's No To Hate campaign, an anti-discrimination initiative linking pupils from local schools with children from schools in the USA over a 6 week period. Through virtual meetings and discussions, children explore their different and diverse experiences as well as learning about strategies for combating and eradicating discrimination. At the end of the 6 weeks, participating children develop a poster to share important messages and lessons which helps to consolidate and share their learning with their peers.

Selection process for programmes and offers to schools

Selecting which schools, and then which children, to engage in these programmes is a delicate balancing act involving a series of steps, as outlined below:

- The Foundation generally works with schools within the 10-mile radius boundary of Chelsea's training ground at Cobham and Stamford Bridge.

- There are termly meetings with the Foundation's Premier League Primary Stars leadership group, which includes members of the leadership team from each school in the above area. The Foundation pitch their ideas to this Forum, which then discusses them in-depth.
- The Foundation then refine their offer and market the resulting programmes and interventions to their key contacts in the schools. Schools also have their own ideas, so a process of negotiating follows to ensure what is delivered reflects the needs of the children and local community.
- The Foundation examines data provided by the participating schools to agree where to best target specific interventions, especially the PSHE focus on EDI. For example, they have discovered that years 2 and 3 (i.e., moving from KS1 to KS2) are often trigger points for exploring issues around race equality and identity, so they target these age groups.
- Finally, S and his team (including the EDI lead, EDI coordinator, digital education lead, and the four schools' education coordinators) work together to agree and fine-tune delivery. A key success factor has been upskilling the education coordinators to deliver these complex EDI interventions. S's team also work closely with the EDI leader for Chelsea FC, who has a strategic role working across the Club and Foundation.

Resilient Rammie and Winning Minds – PSHE programmes

What are they?

Resilient Rammie and Winning Minds are PSHE wellbeing programmes delivered by Derby County Community Trust. They are unique programmes developed between the Premier League Primary Stars team and the health team and have been running for a few years. The Resilient Rammie programme is a general wellbeing programme focused on developing resilience and the Winning Minds programme helps children in years 2 and 6 prepare for SATs and the transition from Key Stage (KS)1 to Key Stage (KS)2 or KS2 to KS3. Schools either sign up for an enhanced package of work including this/these programme/s or buy it/them as bolt-on extras. They are targeted to deliver the programmes to 20 cohorts but currently deliver to 27.

How are the programmes delivered?

Resilient Rammie is a 6-week programme and children work through a booklet for either KS1 or KS2 children. If the programme is delivered as an enhanced package of work, it can be delivered to whole classes or small groups. If the programme is bought as a bolt-on extra, it is delivered only to whole classes. The programme is delivered by the coaches who are not qualified teachers but when it is delivered, either to a small group or whole class, a teacher from the school is present. This is because issues may arise during delivery which may need further support or investigation within the school. If the coach needs support from issues that arise a qualified teacher in the health team is available to lean on.

The content of the Resilient Rammie programme is:

KS1

- What is resilience.
- Detecting other people's feelings.
- Being proud of oneself.
- Who is your Superhero?
- Setting goals and understanding that they may or may not be achieved.

KS2

- What is resilience.
- Helpful and Unhelpful thoughts.
- Self-esteem.
- Understanding their own skillset.
- Steps to success.

Example activity - children are asked to work in pairs throwing paper balls into a cup. They are then asked to repeat the activity but throw the balls into the cup blindfolded and then repeat it throwing the balls backwards over their shoulders. Each step is designed to provide a challenge which they have to overcome. As they complete the tasks the children are encouraged to talk about their thoughts, both helpful and unhelpful, as they tackle the different challenges which enables them to understand resilience better.

The Winning Minds programme is similar to the Resilient Rammie programme but has three strands: one focused on holistic development, one focused on supporting children with SATs preparation and the final strand focused on transitions from either KS1 to KS2 or KS2 to KS3. The aim of the latter part of the programme is that children are psychologically prepared for their transition to the next Key Stage.

Further development of the programmes

- Currently both programmes are delivered by coaches although there is no specific training to deliver them. The aim is to provide training for all coaches delivering the programmes which will be updated annually.
- The needs of children in KS2 vary considerably between those in year 3 and those in year 6. Therefore, an additional aim is to split the KS2 Resilient Rammie programme into an upper and lower programme to cater for the different age ranges and needs.

Youth Board

What is it?

The Youth Board provides a forum for children's voices to be heard and influence the Premier League Primary Stars programme. The Youth Board is made up of children, primarily from years 4 to 6, from schools partnered with the Tigers Trust. The Youth Board is considered a valuable add-on to the programme and is financed by the Tigers Trust.

History of the Youth Board

The first Youth Board ran online in March 2020 in response to the pandemic and lockdown. At that time schools were shutting down and the Premier League Primary Stars delivery team were furloughed leaving the core team of three, working full-time hours. As face-to-face work was not possible, they suggested to a small cohort of their schools that they could create an online Youth Board across the schools enabling students to link up with one another. The schools agreed and it ran from March to the end of the summer term. In September 2020, they opened it up to all their partner schools. Building on the success of the online Youth Board, they ran the first face-to-face Youth Board in September 2021.

How does it work?

Youth Board meetings are run at the Trust Arena where they have a classroom and meeting room. Six meetings are run across the school year including a celebratory session in the summer. Meetings are extra-curricular and run from 4.00-5.30pm with parents providing consent and transporting the children to and from the meetings so, schools are not involved. The meetings follow a similar pattern; the first half is linked to serious content such as what is important to them in life, politics, inclusion, equality etc. The second half is more social with game playing such as table tennis. The Youth Board tends to advise on social action projects; through their intervention they have been involved in projects with Planet League and a loneliness project where the children made zoom calls with residents of a care home. This year there has been a big focus on inclusion and equality, and they have advised on an inclusion project around disability where children try out different sports such as blind football. Children are also tasked with going back into their schools to listen to and collect the voices of children on a variety of issues to shape future ideas for projects. For example, they discovered that children wanted more stadium visits and so a whole day stadium visit will be offered to each school which will cater for between 60-70 children.

Value of the Youth Board

The children on the board understand the children's perspective and can gain pupil voice on a variety of issues and ideas. Children enjoy meeting other children from different schools and the potential for socioeconomic mix is good. Alex, the Partnerships Manager, has developed a good relationship with the pupils and feedback from schools has been 'upbeat and positive'. An unanticipated value has been going straight to parents which has been a 'game changer' for them and they have developed a relationship with parents which they have never had before.

Issues to address

They are aware that the children attending the Youth Board are not necessarily the ones that need it the most. As it is extra-curricular, they rely on children who want to do it and parents who are able to transport them. Although the time commitment is not large, some meetings are not well attended so there is learning there for the Trust to ensure good attendance. Finance can be an issue when the children come up with ideas that cannot be financed but that is discussed and provides further learning.

The future

The Youth Board is still evolving and ways of addressing the issues highlighted above are being considered. The Youth Board will continue as 'the value added' as there are recognised opportunities for children and the development of the programme. It also provides an opportunity to develop relationships with parents which had previously been missing.

Using creative methods to capture impact and inform delivery

What was the issue?

The coach from Watford Community Sports & Education Trust, likes to be creative when working with children and using the information gained from using creative methods to inform and tailor delivery to suit individual children as well as groups of children. This is especially important when working with children in Key Stage 1 (KS1) but is also effective when working with children in Key Stage 2 (KS2).

What did they do about it?

They have customised and incorporated the Zones of Regulation into their work with KS1 children. This is a metacognitive framework and curriculum (Kuypers, 2011) designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control. It helps children have awareness of different feeling states. There are four zones: blue – sad/bored/sick/tired, green – happy/focused/calm/proud, yellow – worried/frustrated/silly/excited and red – overjoyed/elated/panicked/angry/terrified. They have customised this approach as a way of gauging the emotional state and feelings towards an activity of a group of children. They use this approach either pre, during and/or post an activity. Children are given bean bags which they place into one of four coloured hoops. The colours of the hoops and what they signify are agreed with the children. This becomes a quick check-in activity to identify how well an activity has gone and any issues for individual children which can be picked up and addressed either by the coach or the class teacher.

Another creative method that is used regularly is 'Talk Partners'. This is where the coach asks a question, for example 'discuss what you have learnt', 'discuss how you are feeling about...' or 'what did you think about...?' The children talk about the answer with a partner and the coach can then go round and listen in to conversations. This is a good way to gauge what is going on, it empowers children and enables quality talk thereby developing communication skills. In addition, children are more confident and motivated, shyer children feel able to participate and all children learn from one another.

What now/so what?

Both of these methods have value in gauging how well children are engaging in activities, can be used to capture impact and inform future delivery. The methods could be used in tandem with the pre and post questionnaires currently used by CCOs although it is not the main purpose of the approaches.



Appendix 4. Targeted interventions

Targeted Interventions delivered by CCOs in 2021-22

- English
- Maths
- PSHE:
 - Life Skills
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
 - Physical Health
 - Leadership
 - Planet Sustainability
 - Aspirations and Goals
 - Effective Communication
 - Female Empowerment
 - Growth Mindset
 - First Aid
 - Healthy Relationships
 - Travel Safety



Appendix 5. A Reflection Framework for CCOs

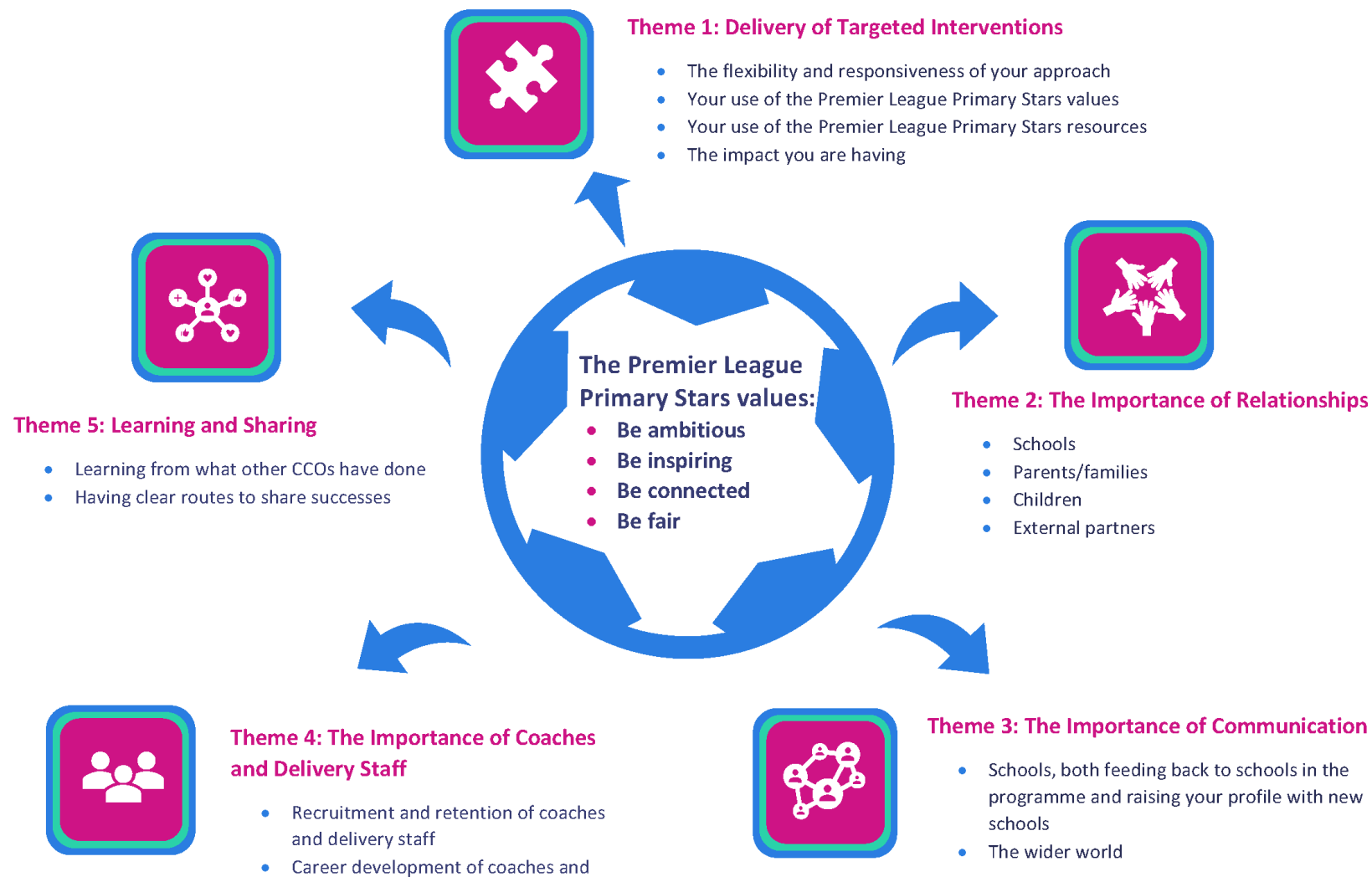
As part of our evaluation of the impact of targeted interventions on primary school pupils we were asked to provide a series of questions that could be used to review success going forward. At the Premier League Primary Stars conference on the 26th October 2022 we asked you, the CCOs, to support us with this by thinking about questions that would help you in reflecting upon your work in the future. We then shared your questions with our evaluation Sounding Board, which has representatives from the PLCF, CCOs and external partners, who devised additional questions. This Reflection Framework draws together the questions from CCOs and the Sounding Board. They are framed around 5 key themes:

- **Theme 1: Delivery of Targeted Interventions**
- **Theme 2: The Importance of Relationships**
- **Theme 3: The Importance of Communication**
- **Theme 4: The Importance of Coaches and Delivery Staff**
- **Theme 5: Learning and Sharing**

The reflective questions under each theme will support you in reflecting upon the different areas of the Premier League Primary Stars programme. They provide a framework for team discussions as well as supporting you in policy and programme development. They will enable you to develop your work in schools, with teachers, parents and children as well as the wider world. They will also support the development of coaches and delivery staff in your teams.

The Premier League Charitable Fund is also a source of support when using this Reflection Framework especially for those smaller CCOs with limited staff and expertise. They provide training, development and networking opportunities for CCOs as well as providing tools and resources for development within each of the key themes.

A Reflection Framework for CCOs





Theme 1: Delivery of Targeted Interventions

This theme has questions to support you reflecting on:



- The flexibility and responsiveness of your approach
- Your use of the Premier League Primary Stars values
- Your use of the Premier League Primary Stars resources
- The impact you are having



Questions:

- How are the Premier League values embedded in all our delivery?
- What resources are we using to embed the Premier League Primary Stars values in our delivery?
- How clear and explicit are we about the different roles in delivery – who does what?
- To what extent is all our work making best use of the links to football?
- How do we know that the targeted intervention is having the desired or expected impact?



Theme 2: The Importance of Relationships



This theme has questions to support you reflecting on your relationships with:

- Schools
- Parents/families
- Children
- External partners



Questions:

- What are we doing to build good relationships with schools and children from the beginning of a targeted intervention?
- How do we know that all coaches/delivery staff are building great relationships with schools, teachers and children?
- What do we think good relationships with schools and children look like?
- What are we doing to ensure that we continue to be relevant to schools?
- To what extent are coaches aware of their own impact/influence within schools and on children?
- How are we ensuring that the Premier League Primary Stars programme and programme staff are becoming embedded in schools, particularly within the ethos, culture and vision of the school?
- How are we assessing/making a judgement about how well our relationships with schools are working?
- What approaches are we using to connect and communicate with parents (particularly those who may be harder to engage)?
- How are we obtaining feedback from parents on targeted interventions and the impact they are having?
- How are we looking for and making the most of partnership opportunities?



Theme 3: The Importance of Communication



This theme has questions to support you reflecting on your communication with:

- Schools, both feeding back to schools in the programme and raising your profile with new schools
- The wider world



Questions:

- Do we know how many schools know about the Premier League Primary Stars programme and how we might find out?
- How proactively and clearly are we promoting targeted interventions to schools?
- How are we communicating with schools/head teachers about what we're doing and our impact?
- What more could we do to communicate our impact (how, to whom and why)?
- How and how often do we celebrate our successes – within our teams and with schools?
- How are we using Youth Voice to promote the Premier League Primary Stars programme in schools and with the wider world?
- How are we using the connection with the club to promote the Premier League Primary Stars programme?
- How do we know that all our materials etc., include the Premier League Primary Stars branding?
- What are we doing to make sure that local media know about the Premier League Primary Stars programme and want to feature what we do?



Theme 4: The Importance of Coaches and Delivery Staff



This theme has questions to support you in thinking about:

- Recruitment and retention of coaches and delivery staff
- Career development of coaches and delivery staff



Questions:

- What are we doing to ensure that the CCO is a long-term career option for coaches/delivery staff (and is more than a 'stepping stone')?
- Are we offering opportunities for career development to coaches/delivery staff to increase their skills and raise their aspirations?
- Are we asking coaches/delivery staff about their career aspirations ('where do you want to be in 2 years time') and how the CCO might meet these?
- How are we supporting new young coaches/delivery staff to gain the skill, understanding and confidence to deliver the range of targeted interventions?
- How are we supporting coaches/delivery staff with challenging work/children?
- To what extent is the CCO making best use of the Premier League Primary Stars conferences and other learning opportunities to boost the confidence and skills of coaches?
- What are we doing to make this CCO a great place to work?
- How are we utilising local authorities, education establishments and the club to inspire prospective staff to apply for jobs with us?



Theme 5: Learning and Sharing



This theme has questions to support you in:

- Learning from what other CCOs have done
- Having clear routes to share successes



Questions:

- What are we doing/have we done to build our relationship with other CCOs?
- What approaches are we using to share our experience of successful targeted intervention programmes with other CCOs?
- What routes are we using to share targeted interventions resources between CCOs?
- How can we use schools' platforms to share successes with parents/families?