

PE, SCHOOL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN ESSEX



PE AND SCHOOL SPORT PARTNERSHIPS

Last year, the Government announced new School Sports Partnerships and a new Enrichment Framework for schools, to ensure all young people have equal access to high-quality sport and extra curricular activities. The announcement was made ahead of the Women's Euros, which England went onto win.

[Prime Minister meets with Lionesses ahead of the Euros to announce a new approach to school sport - GOV.UK](#)

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Press release

Prime Minister meets with Lionesses ahead of the Euros to announce a new approach to school sport

Today the Prime Minister met with the Lionesses as they prepare to defend England's title at the UEFA Women's Euro 2025 football competition next month.

From: [Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street](#) and [The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP](#)

Published 19 June 2025



Rationale for establishing partnerships network

- Regular physical activity can contribute to a wide range of benefits including improving school belonging, teamwork, attainment, mental health, social interaction and stress management. It also has physical health benefits and supports prevention of developing major chronic diseases.
- The Chief Medical Officers recommends an average of 60 daily minutes of physical activity for children and young people to be achieved across the week. Only 47.8% (3.5m) do an average of 60 minutes or more a day, whilst 29.6% (2.2m) do less than an average of 30 minutes a day.
- There are also disparities in access - children from lower socioeconomic background, girls, those with SEND and those from ethnically diverse groups are less likely to be active. Understanding and removing barriers to participation for the least engaged children and providing opportunities for children to be active is key to supporting more to meet the CMO's recommendation.
- This starts with PE. The 2023 Ofsted PE subject report outlined that high quality PE is the foundation of supporting children to be physically active. For many children this is the first and sometimes only exposure to learning to be physically active. But it also goes beyond PE, to the wider opportunities available to children to be active through sport and physical activity.
- The partnerships network will look to address this and establish a network, designed to build stronger links between schools, local clubs, and regional and national organisations. These networks will ensure that schools have access to high-quality resources, expertise, and opportunities that enhance physical education and sport. By fostering collaboration across sectors, the network will strengthen the infrastructure for school sport and create more inclusive, sustainable pathways for young people to build capability and engage in physical activity.

Aims and objectives of the partnership network

- The partnership network will establish an infrastructure to support schools to consistently deliver high-quality experiences in PE, sport, and physical activity for all pupils from all backgrounds.
- We expect the partnership network to recognise areas and schools who are delivering excellent PE, school sport and physical activity initiatives; analyse and understand why there is not consistent wider delivery and seek to expand and overcome any identified barriers to ensure all practice is to a consistently high level for all children.
- Specific aims and objectives of the PE and School Sports Partnerships Network are that it will:
 - Support reintegrating PE, Sport and physical activity into core curricular and extracurricular activities for all pupils to access
 - Elevate the Quality and Standards of PE experiences for all pupils
 - Expand access to high-quality PE, school sport, and physical activity opportunities



Positive Experiences for Children and Young People. Specifically advocating for:



Physical Literacy

Helping children and young people build a positive and meaningful relationship with movement.



Youth Voice

Children and young people's right to be heard.



Mental Health

The role of sport and physical activity in supporting positive mental health and wellbeing.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVING POSITIVE EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT IS A PRIORITY FOR US.

Our outcomes

Active Essex have embraced an outcomes-led approach this year, to strengthen its contribution to the Fit for the Future strategy. This framework allows us to demonstrate our impact across two dimensions: population level and performance level.

It helps answer two key questions – **are we focusing on the right priorities,** and **are we delivering them effectively?**

With these short term outcomes in mind, the following pages will outline the indicators and performance measures that will help us measure our impact. The **indicators** will show the current state of play and will help us to articulate the impact our work has had, by measuring this continually over the next few years. Whilst our **performance measures** are our targets for this financial year 2025-26, that will be our focus of work in order to contribute to that outcome.

Better connected and accessible places, designed to increase active travel and physical activity



Children and young people have positive attitudes to physical activity and sport



Essex has a highly skilled, diverse workforce contributing to a network of connected, resilient and sustainable organisations

The Essex system uses physical activity as a preventative approach to improve social, mental and physical wellbeing



Short-term outcomes

To be achieved by 2035

Long-term outcomes

A shared commitment to community-led, evidence-based approaches that tackle inactivity and address inequalities.

The conditions exist so that communities are resilient, feel safe, are active and healthy.



Where you see this icon click through for full details of performance measures in relation to this workstream.

KEY INGREDIENTS NEEDED FROM AN ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GET IT RIGHT WITH PE & SCHOOL SPORT?

In the system



- Year of [reading, numbers, opportunity]
- Creating Active Schools
- Move With Us
- School Games / Invincible Games
- Holiday and Food Programme
- Opening School Facilities
- Water Safety Forum
- Active Travel

At place



- Schools as Community Hubs
- Spotlight on Castle Point and Rochford
- Sport England Place Expansion
- Reception Readiness
- Pride in Place
- Social Care for Intergeneration

We deliver system outcomes by hardwiring physical activity, across Greater Essex and at place.

WHAT PARTS OF YOUR CURRENT OFFER
ARE SUSTAINABLE?

Discuss key points (aim, approach, offer)



The Active Essex 'Kit Bag'



all information can be found at:



<https://www.activeessex.org/children-young-people/school/>

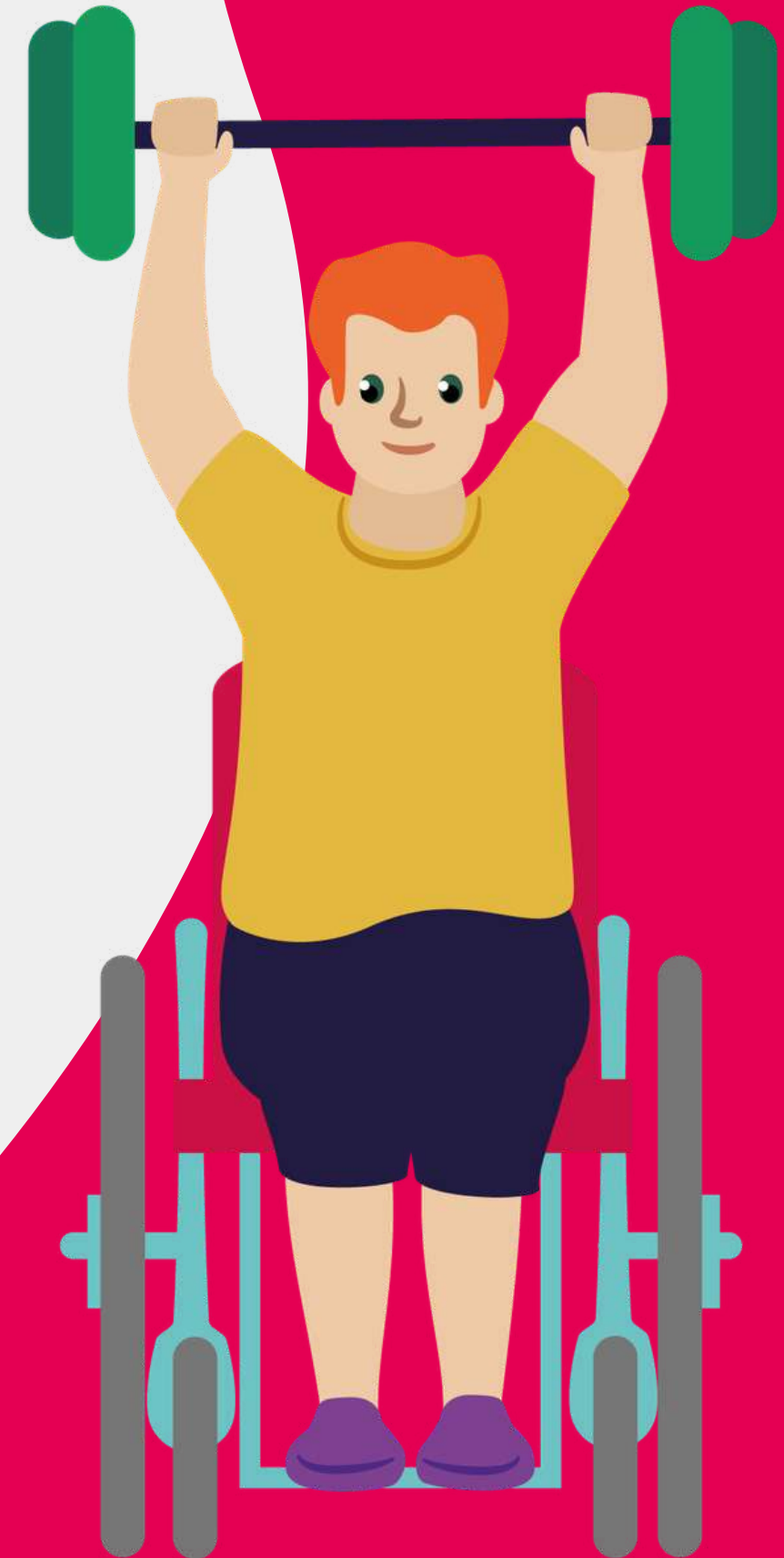


or email us at: cyp@activeessex.org

ABOUT THE SCHOOL GAMES IN GREATER ESSEX

A programme funded by Sport England

- ▶ The School Games is a framework delivered locally by a national network of 450 School Games Organisers and 42 APs, funded by Sport England.
- ▶ Standardised minimum offer locally for schools in terms of 'school sport'.
- ▶ Funding allows a 'host school' (usually secondary) to employ a School Games Organiser for 3 days per week to support local schools in the quest to enable students to be regularly active. Essex has 13.
- ▶ In practical terms, School Games Organisers tend to focus much of their time on the organisation and delivery of local events, festivals and competitions catering for a range of ages/needs and target groups, along with maintaining a competitive structure and pathway for school sport.
- ▶ Essex supports SGOs with local delivery grants and relationships, focused on tackling inequalities, youth voice and local needs.



INVINCIBLE GAMES

Hear from System Leaders about the history of the games and the importance of encouraging youth voice.



Read more about the introduction of the games as an London 2012 Olympic Legacy event [here](#).



Hear from those at the heart of the games, the children, on the topic of youth voice [here](#).



Read about an example of a ripple effect thanks to the games, the Latimer Football League [here](#).



#MOVEWITHUS AMBASSADORS

Move With Us Ambassador Programme This is a youth voice opportunity for 13–17-year-olds to shape the future of physical activity in Essex.

Why Join?

- Influence opportunities for children and young people across Essex.
- Build transferable skills for future careers.
- Attend online or in-person Get Togethers.

Ambassadors have:

- Contributed to Government Youth Voice strategy.
- Selected Essex Activity Awards winners.
- Chosen kit designs for the BGFS Essex competition.
- Participated in Essex Water Safety focus groups.
- Fed back to the Active Essex Board.
- Q&A Olympian Lewis Richardson.
- Taken part in activities such as laser tag, Ninja Warrior, and canoeing.

Ambassadors also receive a reference from Active Essex and Essex County Council.

Please promote this opportunity at meetings.
Leaflets are available.

YOUNG LEADERS ACADEMY

Move With Us Leaders Academy is a youth leadership programme for 12–18-year-olds to develop confidence, leadership, and practical skills through volunteering in sport and physical activity.

Who's it for?

- Young people from community clubs, Essex ActivAte, or Active Essex Foundation programmes.
- Schools can also nominate students.

Programme Includes:

- Training and resources for teachers, coaches, and young people.
- Three-level award scheme.
- Access to a resource hub.
- CV-building and confidence-boosting opportunities.
- Reference to support future endeavours.

Please keep this in mind when discussing youth leadership opportunities.

#MOVEWITHUS 'MOVE MAKERS'

The Move Maker Award is a monthly recognition for young people, individuals, or organisations who inspire others to be active in Essex.

Nominees may have:

- Inspired others to get active
- Overcome personal challenges
- Achieved a personal milestone

Hub teams are encouraged to send nominations to:
cyp@activeessex.org





HOLIDAY ACTIVITY AND FOOD PROGRAMME Essex Evaluation

What is the Holiday Activity and Food Programme?

Essex ActivAte, is the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme for Essex and Thurrock, funded by the Department of Education, and managed by Active Essex on behalf of Essex County Council and Thurrock Council.

Since 2021, the programme has been breaking down barriers, offering dynamic, free physical and enrichment activities, alongside a nutritious meal, family support and food education during the school holidays. This initiative is a lifeline for children on free school meals, and those from low-income families, providing robust support to local communities.

Active Essex commissioned a deep dive evaluation of the programme during the Easter offer, considering the social return on investment, impact on young people and families, local organisations and the wider society.

The report details the significant advancement and impact of Essex ActivAte, of which have been possible due to the continued funding.

The programme has been effective in breaking down barriers for children, young people and their families, who have become to rely on the offer to feed and care for their children during the school holidays. Discontinuing this funding would not only halt this progress but also potentially reverse the remarkable strides that have been made in fostering resilience, rather than reliance, empowering families and communities to thrive independently.

What do we mean by Social Return on Investment?

It is a way to measure the value created by the programme in terms of its social, environmental and economic impacts. The method considers both the positive and negative effects on society, looking at the benefits, such as improved wellbeing, education and community development, and compares them to the costs of the programme.



TOP HEADLINES

Therefore
EASTER 2024 IMPACT: 2024 IMPACT:

For every £1 spent on delivery, at least
£4.49
of social value was generated.

*this is a cautious estimate of the social value, and is AT LEAST £4.49

The estimated social value generated by 2024 programme in Essex is
£22.5M

taking into account the improvement to the physical and mental health families, improved nutrition, educational engagement, increased work hours and parental spending.

PAST 3 YEARS IMPACT:

250,000
meals provided since 2021, to help reduce holiday hunger.

Essex programme supported
30,000
children and young people

170
different physical enrichment and food activities delivered. This includes, cooking classes, canoeing and Multi-sport.

▶ Watch the Essex programme overview video [here](#).



The full evaluation reports can be found [here](#).



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Active in Mind

Primary & Secondary

Understand ways to self-activate and the role of physical activity in improving the mental health of young people.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Physical Activity & Emotional Wellbeing (TPP)

Primary & Secondary

Focusing on active interventions and the use of physical activity to help support emotional wellbeing and contribute to behaviour support.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Health & Safety for PE

Primary & Secondary

Providing relevant and up to date advice and guidance with regards to health and safety in PE. These courses are essential for all NQTs or teachers working in schools delivering PE and school sport.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Inclusion in PE

Primary & Secondary

Practical ideas to improve confidence, knowledge and skills when working with SEND pupils, and embedding inclusive practice in your setting.



Early Years

0-5 Years Old

In collaboration with Essex County Council Early Years to ensure your youngest pupils have the best start to develop their physical literacy.

[CLICK HERE](#)



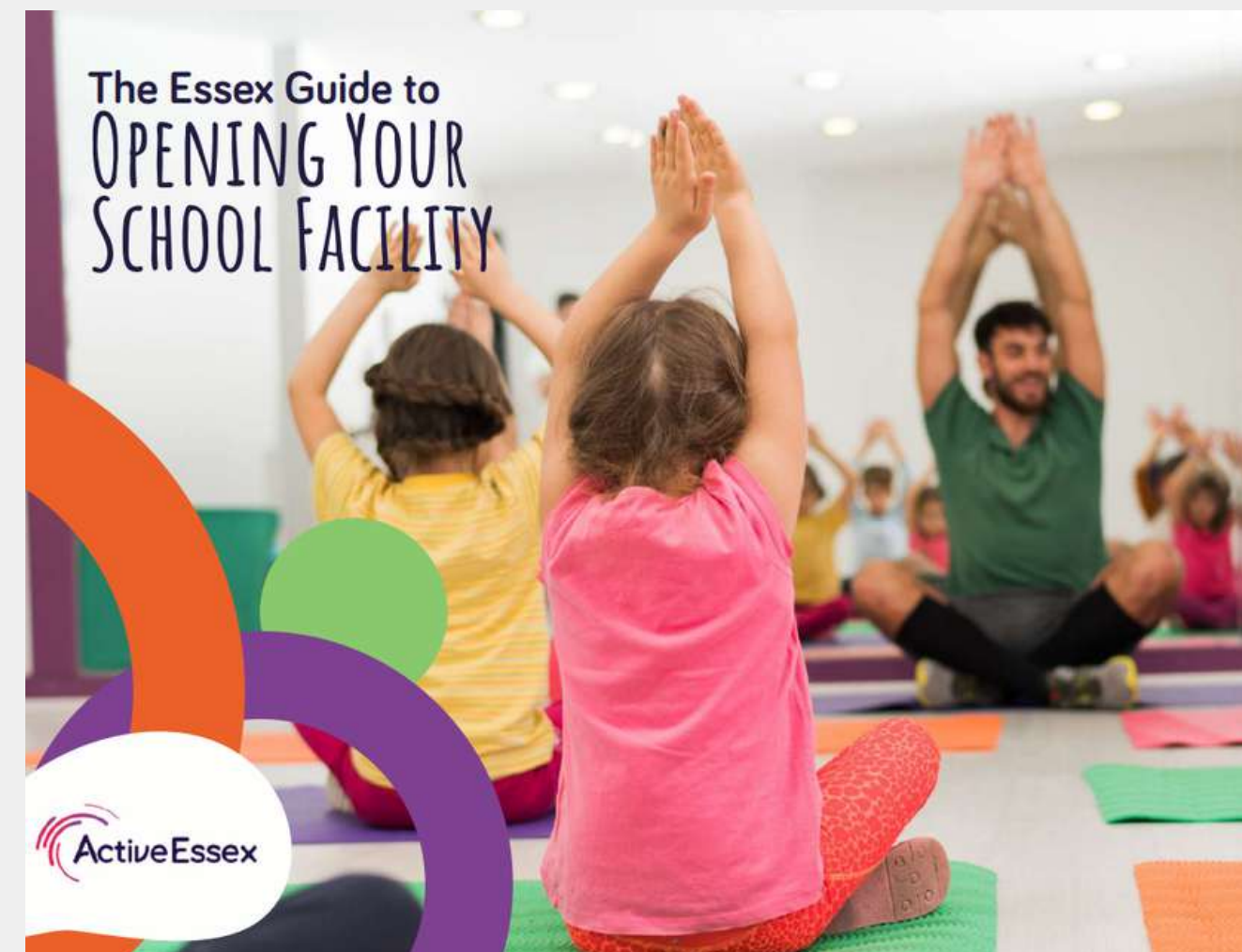
PE Conference

Primary & Secondary

Interact with PE professionals, collaborate and engage in Essex-wide projects and refresh your extended curriculum offer with programmes and resources.

OPENING SCHOOL FACILITIES

Since 2023, Active Essex (through DCMS Funding) has supported 34 schools across Essex to run various sporting projects to meet these aims. Through the funding, there have been 23,551 children and young people and 9,988 community user's at OSF funded sessions.



MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOPS

Active Essex has delivered quadrant-based Mental Health Workshops aimed at supporting pastoral leads, mental health leads, Heads of Year, and other key school staff. These sessions are designed to help staff understand what support is available to their schools to improve children's mental health through physical activity. Each workshop included agenda items around:



Active Essex – showcasing CYP programmes that use physical activity to support mental wellbeing



HAF (Holiday Activities and Food Programme) – outlining opportunities for eligible pupils during school holidays



AEF (Active Essex Foundation) – sharing targeted interventions and inclusive delivery models



Mental Health Foundation – providing insight into evidence-based approaches and resources for schools

Workshops last 2–3 hours, include discussion time, and lunch is provided.

Hub teams are encouraged to promote this opportunity to relevant partners and school contacts.

SPORT & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

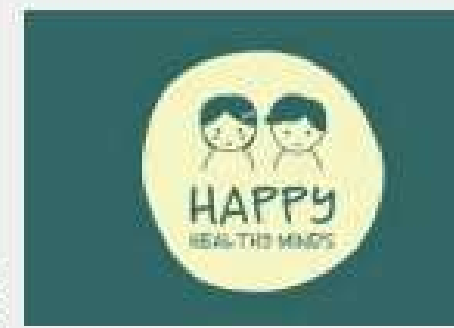


SPORT & YOUTH
MENTAL HEALTH
PROJECT

- Working across Greater Essex with locally trusted delivery partners to provide targeted support for children and young people's mental health using physical activity.
- Upskilling, capacity building and connecting local voluntary and community sector organisations.
- Engaging with 'Youth Voice' to shape and influence the design of the project, including barriers to participation.
- Socialising and working with the wider system partners, including Education and Health.
- Exploring more sustainable models beyond the project life e.g., MHSTs



Local VCSE organisations involved:



WILDERNESS
FOUNDATION UK



SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY - SCHOOL BASED EXAMPLE



The Batic Partnership Trust – funded through Active Essex Foundation’s Sport & Youth Mental Health Project and working in partnership with the local School Sport Partnership



A small charity set up by 15 schools in the Benfleet area



Overseen by the Batic Trust Lead Counsellor and delivered by a select group of SSP sports staff (all trained in Mental Health First Aid Level 3)



Funding provided each of the 15 schools with a bespoke small group intervention project for a minimum of a term, working with students at risk of mental health issues (anxiety, depression, behaviour) using sport and physical activity as the vehicle combined with ‘mentoring’ conversations and discussions



Added value to the Batic Counselling team – also receiving CPD on how sport and activity can support their work



A full report to be produced in July 2026



THE DAILY MILE - ESSEX APPROACH



Internal
Campaigns



School Visits



Walk
&
Talk



National Campaigns
(National School
Sport week,
National fitness day)



EARLY YEARS & NEURODIVERSE/SEND INVINCIBLE MILE

[Click here to access support
through Active Essex](#)

SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGNS: WALK & TALK

★ 9-15th February 2026 - Children's mental health week

★ 11th-17th May 2026 - Mental health awareness week

★ 10th October 2026 - World Mental Health Day

✓ OVER 200 SCHOOLS

Active Essex Foundation #MOVE WITH US

10 TOPIC QUESTION CARDS

SCHOOL LIFE - What's your favourite subject and why? - What do you enjoy most about school and why? - Why is school important to you? - What are you looking forward to this year at school?	OLYMPICS - What was your favourite part of the Olympics and Paralympics? - If you could participate in the olympics/paralympics in any event, what would it be and why?
HALLOWEEN - Are you going to be celebrating Halloween this year? - Are your school doing anything for halloween? - What's your favourite thing about halloween? - What would be your favourite character to dress up as?	WHEN I GROW UP - What do you want to be when you're older? - Who is your role model? - What are you looking forward to when you get older?
MUSIC - What's your favourite song? - Who is your favourite artist/band? - If you were in a band, what instrument would you play and why? - Do you like listening to music? When do you listen to music?	FRIENDSHIP - What makes a good friend? - Why is having a friend important? - What is your favourite thing to do with your friends?
EMOTIONS - What makes you feel better when you're upset? - What are the things you enjoy doing? - What is your greatest talent? - When was a time you felt excited? What was it about and why?	POSITIVITY - How do you feel when someone thanks you for something you did? - What do you love doing that makes you feel happiest? - What are the things that make me smile?
WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK? - What would you put in your wellbeing backpack to carry you up the mountain? - What is your favourite food that you would pack? - What activity could you put in your backpack to help you to relax?	AROUND THE WORLD - Do you speak any languages, if so can you tell me something in that language? - Do you have a language you would like to learn, and if so why? - If you could go anywhere in the world, where would that be and why?

#MOVE WITH US

10 TOPIC QUESTION CARDS

FRIENDSHIP - Who is your oldest friend, and how did you meet? - What qualities do you value most in a friend? - Share one of the best memories you've had with a friend?	PERSONAL GROWTH - How has school contributed to your personal growth? - Discuss a challenge you faced and how it helped you to become stronger - What are your strengths?
ASPIRATIONS - What are your biggest dreams? - Where do you see yourself in 10 years time? - What career do you wish to pursue? - Discuss a time you achieved something that made you feel proud.	OLYMPICS & PARALYMPICS - Did you watch the Olympics and Paralympics? - What was your favourite part of the games? - If you could participate in the olympics/paralympics in any event, which would it be and why?
EMOTIONS - What makes you feel better when you're upset? - What are the things you enjoy doing? - What is your greatest talent? - When was a time you felt excited? What about and why?	SCHOOL LIFE - What makes you feel better when you're upset? - What are the things you enjoy doing? - What is your greatest talent? - When was a time you felt excited? What about and why?
SCHOOL LIFE - What's your favourite subject and why? - What do you enjoy most about school and why? - Why is school important to you? - Is there anything you are worrying about in this upcoming academic year? If so what is it?	WALK & TALK - How have you found this Walk & Talk activity? - Why do you think it might be important to talk about the items you have discussed today? - How has it made you feel speaking to your peer?
MUSIC - Who is your favourite artist/band? - What do you like most about them? - When do you enjoy listening to music? - How does listening to music make you feel?	PHYSICAL ACTIVITY - What forms of physical activity do you currently engage in? - When undergoing this physical activity, how does it make you feel? - How often do you engage in physical activity and where does it take place?



The Daily Mile Foundation & SAMH Resources

If you're not yet signed up to The Daily Mile, please use this link to register before signing up to the Mental Health Toolkit.

EARLY YEARS MOVEMENT MARK

- A free opportunity for Early Years Settings to be awarded for their work around physical development and physical activity.
- An online award open to all Early Years Charter members across Essex
- A self-assessment tool, which enables practitioners to reflect on physical development and physical activity provision in their setting
- Recognition of commitment towards developing good healthy habits and attitudes towards movement within the EYFS.



Rolling Application



3 Cohorts



Poster coming soon



KEY STAGE 1 AWARDS

- Opportunity to recognise excellence in delivery of physical activity, P.E and school sport in Key Stage & complements the Youth Sports Trust School Games Mark.
- The award considers how schools are supporting positive early movement opportunities by developing pupil's physical literacy – confidence, competence, enjoyment, knowledge and understanding – and also enabling ALL pupils to experience a broad range of experiences from ages 5-7.
- Successful applicants will receive a framed certificate, digital logo and be invited to the annual Active Essex Key Stage 1 Awards Ceremony - valid for 2 years
- Schools utilise the questions and criteria, as a self-assessment tool to improve future provision.



**April - Oct
Nov - Feb**



Poster coming soon



**140 members
45 Successful 2025**



ACTIVE LIVES SURVEY

Active Lives Survey The Children and Young People (CYP) Active Lives Survey has been running for nine years and measures engagement in sport and physical activity across Essex.

It includes:

- ★ Participation levels
- ★ Types of activities
- ★ Mental wellbeing
- ★ Physical Literacy
- ★ Swimming ability

Sport England randomly selects schools each term (three terms per year), and Active Essex is funded to support as many completions as possible.

The end-of-year report is published each December, comparing Essex data to national figures.



ESSEX SCHOOL GAMES ORGANISER GRANT

Essex School Games Organiser Grants were offered to each SGO of £1,000 grants (£500 each for Leadership and Local Insight needs such as SEND, Girls, and IMD).



BARCLAYS GIRLS FOOTBALL IN SCHOOLS (BGFS)

This national programme, delivered in partnership with the FA, aims to ensure equal access to football for girls in primary, secondary, and SEND schools.

Aims:

- Increase physical activity through football
- Improve physical literacy
- Build confidence and competence in football and officiating
- Create pathways into community football

What's Coming Up:

- Young Leaders Training – preparing students to coach
- Disney-Inspired Festivals – engaging primary girls in football

Last Year's Impact:

- Over 170 secondary leaders trained
- More than 500 primary girls engaged

Active Essex deliver where SGOs have limited capacity.

WHAT FROM THIS OFFER COULD SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL/STUDENTS MOST?

WHAT 3 ACTIONS WILL YOU TAKE TO IMPLEMENT THIS?



WHAT WOULD IT ACTUALLY MEAN TO 'DE-SILO PE AND SCHOOL SPORT'

De-siloing PE and school sport means breaking down the separation between PE lessons, extra-curricular school sport, and wider physical-activity/movement initiatives or opportunities so that they operate as one coherent, joined-up system rather than isolated programmes.

In Greater Essex, this aligns with our 'Active Schools in Essex' approach, a transformational programme, funded by Public Health, based on system change and the use of whole-school approaches to physical activity and movement

Together, we can work to de-silo PE and school sport in Greater Essex by **treating physical activity as a unified, system-wide priority**, not a collection of separate activities. It's about integration, collaboration, and creating a consistent, positive activity experience for every child.



WHAT IS ACTIVE SCHOOLS IN ESSEX?

Collectively in Essex, we recognise the necessity for increased physical activity and healthy behaviours for children, young people and adults within our school communities.

Through improved system alignment we look to work more **effectively** with our schools and senior leaders across the county to improve education outcomes and **enhance personal development** for our children and young people – by championing movement as a tool for **whole school improvement**.



£100,000 Public Health funding awarded to Active Essex to develop Whole School Approaches to movement methodology.

Please register your interest at:
cyp@activeessex.org to find out more
and to embark as a trail blazer on
this exciting improvement journey!

IMPACTING SCHOOL PRIORITIES



IMPACT

Children Are More Active

71% of schools* have already recorded an increase in pupils meeting daily activity guidelines.

(*using Full CAS approach)

Behaviour, Wellbeing & Readiness to Learn Are Improving

Teachers report:

- Better concentration
- Higher engagement
- Improved behaviour for learning
- Reduced incidents at lunchtime

Students say movement “helps me concentrate” and “refreshes our brains.”

Whole-School Culture Is Shifting

Profiling scores show significant improvements for schools across the following areas:

- Policy
- Environments
- Staff (stakeholders)
- Opportunities across the day and beyond

WHAT WE’VE LEARNED

- Deep practitioner support accelerates change.
- Schools value expertise more than ‘one off’ additional project funding.
- Place-based working strengthens insight and alignment.
- CAS auditing builds accountability and sustainable progress.
- Staff perceptions of physical activity are shifting beyond PE.
- System connections are deepening and creating ripple effects.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

To maintain momentum, the programme will:

- Continue broadening understanding of physical activity across the whole day and beyond.
- Balance school autonomy with structured touchpoints
- Embed a continuous audit cycle
- Strengthen system alignment to reduce fragmentation
- Sustain practitioner support to drive long-term change



ACTIVE SCHOOLS IN ESSEX

Active Schools in Essex is shifting culture, strengthening systems and improving children's health, behaviour and learning – not through one-off interventions but through deep practitioner support and whole-school transformations.



Deep-dive, bespoke support outperforms lighter-touch models.

Whole-School Culture Shift:

Physical activity embedded across the day impacts engagement.



71%

of participating schools* increased the number of pupils meeting the CMO 60min daily activity guidelines.

*(Full CAS model)

CPD is shifting perceptions:

Staff now see physical activity as whole school, de-siloing PE.

Strengthening the system around the school unlocks cohesive opportunities and funding.

Behavioural incidents decreased through action plan implementation.

Teachers report better engagement & concentration.



Enhanced Monitoring:

Schools now have a much clearer understanding of how active their students are through improved monitoring processes integrated during the audit phase.



OUR SCHOOL SNAPSHOTS HELP TO BRING THIS
WORK TO LIFE.

IN YOUR GROUPS, PLEASE READ THROUGH THE
EXAMPLES YOU HAVE AND DISCUSS:

- WOULD THIS MEET A NEED IN YOUR SCHOOL?
- IS THIS REPLICABLE?
- WHAT WOULD NEED TO BE CHANGE TO SUIT YOUR SCHOOL/SETTING?



As a group, agree on a priority action that Active Essex could take to support you through the next academic year



Contact us at: CYP@activeessex.org