

### Overview

The Youth Sport Trust remains committed to equipping educators and empowering young people across the country, but we recognise that there is a need to have a heightened understanding in locations that serve young people who need access to play and sport the most.

To support us in doing this, we have identified 20 locations across England that will be key focus areas for Youth Sport Trust, and through a whole organisation commitment, we will be able to concentrate our capacity and resource to apply a sharpened focus in these target locations. This will enable us to take urgent action to build back healthier, happier, more resilient young people. These locations will also provide the opportunity to establish an evidence base to drive a generational shift and achieve societal change.

#### These locations were identified based on the following criteria:

- high levels of deprivation
  - high levels of childhood obesity
  - low levels of participation in sport and physical activity
  - readiness to work with us
  - potential and/or existing collaborations
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We will be starting locally by targeting our work in a smaller geographical location, where we will focus our understanding of needs, deliver interventions, build capacity, and understand what works in these initial focus areas. Once momentum is being gained in these initial focus areas, we will seek to apply this learning to another location in the area, and then ultimately, across the broader location.

This report was produced by the Youth Sport Trust’s Research and Insight Team. It synthesises the insight gathered from 20 initial focus areas in England. The insight focuses on the local context and the PE, school sport and physical activity (PESSPA) provision. The report is based on headline secondary data relating to schools and young people in the initial focus areas, plus insight from a mix of 161 primary, secondary, special and other schools across the initial focus areas.



### Key challenges young people are facing - identified by schools



Poor mental health



Poor physical health



Social challenges



Educational challenges



Challenging home lives



Schools unable to fully meet young people's needs



### Groups of young people facing the greatest inequalities and challenges - identified by schools



Young people with **lack of parental engagement & support**



Young people with **Special Educational Needs**



Young people from **non-working families**



Young people with **English as an Additional Language**



Young people from **low socio-economic backgrounds**



**Girls**



Young people with **poor mental health**



Young people of an **Asian background**



Children and young people are facing challenges and inequalities **at all stages of school**

### Key priorities for schools



To improve young people's **wellbeing**



To improve young people's **engagement in school and wider community cohesion**



To improve young people's **educational outcomes**, including their educational attainment and life skills



To develop the **curriculum**, improve **provision** for young people, and support **staff development**



To improve the **provision of PESSPA**, including an understanding of its **value**

### The role of PE, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA)



On average, **PE provision falls short** of the 2-hour guideline for schools at all key stages.

**Less than half** of young people attend any form of physical activity opportunities per week.



Young people **most in need** are most likely to be the least active, plus those who are overweight / obese, live far from school, live in overcrowded homes, have SEND, or are at risk of exclusion.



Schools think it is **important** for young people to be involved in PESSPA, however, feel more can be done to ensure that staff feel **competent** using physical activity and sport to support young people most in need, and to help young people have a better **understanding** of the value of PESSPA.



**Youth voice** is regularly collected across schools but can be more in-depth and meaningful, and sometimes more inclusive.



The quality of **partnership working** between schools and other schools or organisations in their local areas appears to be mixed. Passionate and pro-active individuals are key to successful partnerships.



To help ensure that **PESSPA is at the heart of schools**, it needs to be sufficiently prioritised, people need to understand the value of PESSPA, the provision needs to foster enjoyment and inclusivity, and there needs to be sufficient resources allocated to PESSPA.