

EXTRA TIME EVALUATION REPORT

June 2025



substance.

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Summary of Findings

This evaluation report aimed to evaluate the delivery and implementation of the Extra Time programme.

The evaluation of the Extra Time programme consisted of surveys, interviews and focus groups. Overall, Substance conducted nine interviews and four focus groups, which involved a total of twenty-six participants, including nine different families, three Scottish FA staff members, two school headteachers and twelve club staff members.

Out of the thirty clubs delivering Extra Time, all clubs delivered after school sessions during regular term time over the last quarter (Q4 January – March 2025); eleven of these also offered breakfast clubs. Most sessions included food provision, sports activity and, where necessary, transport for children.

From the clubs' self-reporting on the number of children accessing the Extra Time programme, we can assume the programme has supported an average of 3,500 children in each quarter during term time and around 2,000 children in each quarter during holiday periods.

The evaluation found that key factors contributing to the successful delivery of the programme included the importance of skilled and well-trained staff, safe and inclusive environments, attention to children, and family voice. Challenges to programme delivery included staff recruitment and retention, as well as the behaviour of some children - which remains a persistent challenge for many clubs. Many clubs reported high interest and demand for the Extra Time programme.

The case studies conducted, provided evidence on the impact of Extra Time on:



Improving school attendance and attainment with anecdotal evidence of improved school attendance from children who attend Extra Time.



Tackling poverty by providing free access to organised activity before and after the school day, and during the holidays, with a perceived impact on parents/carers gaining and maintain employment.



Tackling food insecurities by providing free food and snacks which resulted in a perceived more equal access to food while at the service. Clubs actively worked with families to reduce stigma around asking for support in relation to food provision.



Improving children's health and wellbeing by reportedly increasing their confidence and social skills, while providing a supportive and a safe environment.

Summary of Findings

Introduction

Eradicating Child poverty and supporting economic growth are key priorities for the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government's School Age Childcare Programme is committed to building a system of school age childcare which is targeted to the children and families who need it most. Their ambition is to improve the choice, flexibility, affordability and accessibility of services which provide a range of childcare options for families and can deliver positive outcomes for both children and families.

The Extra Time programme is a joint initiative between the Scottish Government and the Scottish FA, which supports local football clubs and trusts to provide before school, after school, and holiday activity clubs for targeted primary school children from low income families. The programme builds on the Scottish FA's commitment to use the 'Power of Football' to help support and strengthen its clubs and the communities they serve. The Extra Time programme is now entering its third year of delivery.

The Scottish FA – as the national governing body for football – have developed a network of over 2,500 clubs across Scotland. The breadth and diversity of the communities these clubs serve is considerable, with many supporting areas with high levels of social deprivation. The role of football clubs within local communities is something that the Scottish Government is interested in exploring as part of the 'Extra Time' programme. However the Scottish Government equally recognises that football clubs are only one of many possible community anchor organisations (both statutory and non-statutory) which can provide support to local communities.

In late Summer 2023, the Scottish FA invited applications from football clubs and trusts, with a view to developing and testing how organised activity services could play an important role in building a more accessible system in the future. This includes understanding the role of activity services in promoting wider engagement with local support services; improving outcomes for families on low incomes; providing families with alternative childcare solutions that support their childcare needs.

Alongside the Scottish FA's comprehensive knowledge of the national and regional football club landscape, the Extra Time clubs actively engage with schools, headteachers, local authorities, leisure trusts and other organisations to provide services which meet the needs of the families in their community. Extra Time aims to deliver activity-based services that have the ability to support parents into work, training, or studying (or to facilitate respite), whilst also reducing inequalities in access to a range of activities around the school day for those children who would otherwise not be able to access them. This is with the dual aim of increasing children's participation in organised activities – which can improve wellbeing, attainment, and physical and mental health – and enabling parents to extend their working day whilst their child attends the club; the objective being the enablement of parents to improve their employment circumstances and, subsequently, lift themselves out of poverty.

Extra Time services currently offer spaces at no cost for those children who have been identified as at the greatest risk of experiencing child poverty. Through comprehensive monitoring and evaluation, the programme has developed a better understanding of the secondary outcomes that children's activity services can achieve -including tackling food insecurities and improving mental health for families – as well as wider outcomes, including indirect outcomes.

The Extra Time programme centres upon the following funding principles:

- **An increased accessibility to organised children's activities for targeted families.**
- **A better understanding of the role that organised children's activities can play in delivering food/tackling food insecurities.**
- **More parents and carers from targeted families can sustain and/or increase their working hours and/or improve their employment circumstances, take up training, studying or facilitate respite opportunities.**
- **Indicators and tools to measure improved mental health and wellbeing, parents, and carers.**
- **A better understanding of additional impacts and outcomes that are realised because of providing targeted families and communities with access to funded organised activities.**
- **Engagement with parents, carers, and communities to increase community involvement and the numbers of children and families participating in grassroots clubs and organisations.**



Programme Timeline

Following the initial consultation and application period, the first phase of the Extra Time programme included activity from twenty-five clubs from October 2023 to March 2024.

The success of this delivery period led to an extension of funding, enabling a second phase. This phase saw the introduction of six additional clubs to the programme - enabling **thirty-one** organisations to offer Extra Time activity from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

The Extra Time programme has now been extended into a third phase. Phase three will further develop the Extra Time programme, with additional clubs due to be included throughout the period of 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026, thus expanding the local authority coverage, overall programme impact, and number of families supported.



Aims and Research Questions

As part of the ongoing evaluation of the Extra Time programme, an evaluation report was commissioned. This report aims to evaluate the **processes and implementation** of the Extra Time programme, providing a deeper understanding of programme delivery in line with key emerging themes and findings from the previously published Extra Time Annual Impact report. Evidence and insight captured as part of this will **highlight the potential effects of the programme against the funding principles, as well as providing key learnings and observations, which will aid in shaping and developing the overall programme.**

The report looks to evaluate the **delivery of the Extra Time programme** and to address recommendations from the previous internal phase one report and published Annual Impact report. For reference, previous recommendations, in addition to how this report aims to address them, are as follows:

- Further research should aim to refine the reporting survey and continue to provide support to clubs on sections that were less complete or questions that may be misinterpreted. Future research should explore the potential of collecting individual participant and family data to avoid double counting in quarters and between term and holiday time.
The evaluation report looks at how clubs have started collecting individual participant level data through the Views software.
- Further work should look to dive deeper into some of the stories developing in key outcome areas (e.g. school attendance/attainment, tackling child poverty, improving outcomes for children) through conducting in depth case study research that involves clubs and relevant stakeholders.
The report showcases three thematic case studies in relation to the key outcome areas identified in previous reports. The case studies explore the potential effects of Extra Time on school attendance and attainment, how Extra Time tackles poverty and whether Extra Time improves the health and wellbeing of children.

- Future research should also explore the variety of activities that are provided as part of the Extra Time programme as well as the format and type of food provision.

The core focus of this report explores the variety and delivery of activities that clubs provide as part of their Extra Time programmes. The report looks to develop understanding of how Extra Time is being delivered by clubs, identifying areas that have worked well and areas that could be improved. This report aims to explore the challenges and barriers faced by clubs and how they have adapted delivery to improve their Extra Time programmes and what further changes they plan to make moving forwards.



Aims and Research Questions

Research questions for this evaluation report were co-designed as a result of Substance’s multiple meetings with the Scottish FA and the Scottish Government; these meetings involved stakeholders from Extra Time programme management, policy managers and research analysts.

The below research questions were co-developed as a result of those meetings:

- **How has the Extra Time programme been delivered by clubs?**
- **What successes have clubs’ Extra Time programmes had and what facilitated those successes?**
- **What challenges have clubs had and what are the barriers they have faced with their Extra Time programmes?**
- **What lessons have been learned to support improvements to the delivery of Extra Time and the programme going forwards?**

Furthermore, this report looks to understand process-related questions on an organisational level through interviewing Scottish FA staff members (further details provided in the methods section). The research questions for this element of the work include:

- **How have the Scottish FA delivered the Extra Time programme?**
- **What has worked well and what challenges have the Scottish FA faced in the implementation of the Extra Time programme?**
- **Are the Scottish FA and football clubs best placed to deliver a programme like Extra Time?**

Further research questions were developed as a result of the proposed inclusion of thematic case studies (further details provided in the methods section). These research questions include:

- **What impact is the Extra Time programme having on school attendance/attainment?**
- **How does the Extra Time programme help tackle poverty?**
- **What impact has the Extra Time programme made on the health and wellbeing of children attending the programme?**

The following section of this report outlines the methods employed to answer the above research questions and the analysis conducted.

Evaluation Methods and Analysis

Substance used a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the programme against its key aims, gathering data primarily from the Extra Time quarterly club reporting survey, interviews and focus groups.

The below table gives an overview of the research approach, methods and which research question(s) they were linked to:

METHOD	METHOD COMPONENT	RESEARCH QUESTION(S) ADDRESSED
Quantitative data	Review of existing Scottish FA data	How has the Extra Time programme been delivered by clubs?
Case studies	Three thematic case studies on: school attendance/ attainment, tackling child poverty, improving child health and wellbeing (including interviews/focus groups with club staff members and families)	What successes have clubs’ Extra Time programmes had and what facilitated those successes? What challenges and barriers have clubs faced with their Extra Time programmes?
What lessons have been learned to support improvements to the delivery of Extra Time and the programme going forwards?	Review of questions in the club quarterly reporting survey	How the Extra Time programme has been delivered? What successes have clubs’ Extra Time programmes had and what facilitated those successes? What challenges and barriers have clubs faced with their Extra Time programmes? What lessons have been learned to support improvements to the delivery of Extra Time and the programme going forwards?

Table 1: Type of methods used for this Evaluation report and research questions they aim to address.

Evaluation Methods and Analysis

Quantitative data - Monitoring and evaluation data was collected through an online survey, created by a partnership between the Scottish FA and Scottish Government. The online survey has five sections:



Questions in the survey are designed to generate a range of insight, from quantitative information around the number of project participants, to qualitative information on key outcomes (e.g. organised children's activity, food delivery, employment, mental health etc.).

Club staff members are required to complete the survey on a quarterly basis. The data collected is available for all thirty clubs delivering the programme; Q1 (April-June 2024) being the exception with twenty nine clubs as Blairgowrie & Rattray CFT had no formal activity during the quarter. An additional club, Inverkeithing Hillfield Swifts F.C, worked with the Scottish FA throughout Q4 (January- March 2025) to build capacity and develop their potential delivery model, therefore they did not deliver any sessions. The limitations of this method of data collection will be highlighted in the last paragraph of this section.

Case studies- Overall, Substance conducted six interviews and four focus groups, which involved a total of twenty-three participants, including nine different families, two school headteachers and twelve club staff members.

Deep dive case studies have been conducted to collect data around three themes that emerged from the previous Extra Time Annual Impact report (school attendance/attainment, tackling poverty, improving child health and wellbeing). These themes were evidenced by a few clubs in their monitoring and evaluation form and are also of key interest to the Scottish Government; this is because these themes match the priorities of the Extra Time programme and wider Scottish Government policy objectives. Through conversations with the Scottish FA and Scottish Government, clubs were identified to participate in the case study research if they had previously provided evidence around these topic areas. The data limitations of this sampling approach are highlighted below. Due to clubs having different focus areas and the scope of each case study differing, the following methods have been used:

School attendance/attainment- Completed with one club in depth, Substance conducted **interviews** with two of their delivery staff, and two headteachers of schools that they work with.

Tackling poverty- A **focus group** with five representatives from four clubs who focus on working with children and families in high Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas, looking at how Extra Time programmes impact child poverty.

Improving health and wellbeing- A **focus group** with five representatives from five clubs who have previously evidenced the impact of their Extra Time programmes on children, in relation to topics such as health and wellbeing.

To provide independence for the evaluation, Substance researchers conducted the interviews and focus groups. The interview and focus group guides were semi-structured, which allowed key information about the theme to be collected whilst also giving club staff members freedom to express their experiences in relation to Extra Time. After receiving participants' consent, all interviews and focus groups were recorded and a transcript generated, which was then used for analysis.

The data gathered via the above focus groups and interviews was supplemented by interviews with parents/carers whose children have taken part in Extra Time. The families contacted by Substance were identified with the help of club staff members. Additionally, Substance encouraged participation by providing incentives for the interviews with parents/carers, in the form of a £10 online voucher.

Qualitative data – Additional Extra Time qualitative data was captured in the quarterly club reporting survey. The below table highlights the qualitative questions currently in the quarterly reporting survey which relate to each of the research questions..



Evaluation Methods and Analysis

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	QUARTERLY REPORTING CLUB SURVEY QUESTIONS
How has the Extra Time programme been delivered?	Q3- Brief overview of what the club is delivering to children, including summary of times/days you are providing childcare, highlighting any changes from the previous quarter's delivery
What successes have clubs' Extra Time programmes had and what facilitated those successes?	Q29- Please describe any challenges or successes in engaging with stakeholders? Q33- From your learning over this quarter, please set out what clubs need to be able to deliver activity provision successfully. Q37- Please detail any key success the club has had this quarter
What challenges have clubs had and what are the barriers they have faced with their Extra Time programmes?	Q29- Please describe any challenges or successes in engaging with stakeholders? Q34- Please detail any risks that you/the club identified throughout the quarter Q35- Please describe how you have been managing, or plan to manage, the risks identified Q36- Please detail any unexpected challenges you faced during this quarter. This should include any problems you encountered that slowed progress, got in the way of the outcomes being achieved, or resulted in changes to your plans.
What lessons have been learned to support improvements to the delivery of Extra Time and the programme going forwards?	Q38- What are your lessons learned/key findings from this quarter of the project? Q39- Have you, or will you have to make any changes to the activity provision? [yes/no] Q40- If answered yes above, please detail actions/activities that have been adapted or not delivered, what changes have been made, and why

Table 2: Research questions of this Evaluation Report and how they relate to question the quarterly club reporting survey.



Qualitative questions and interviews were analysed thematically through an inductive coding process, allowing for the identification of recurring patterns, themes, and insights within the responses.

Data Limitations: Substance acknowledges that there are several limitations around the sources of data. As briefly mentioned above, the quantitative data derives mostly from a quarterly reporting survey, which is completed by the club staff members themselves and, therefore, is self-reported.

Some of the questions around the number of children and families supported cannot be considered completely reliable estimates of the total children supported. This is because the reporting method does not identify unique participants. In fact, the surveys collect data on the number of children who attended each type of session, both for the term time and the holiday period. These totals were found to be unreliable because they are inconsistent when cross-referenced with daily capacity numbers within the clubs. Therefore, these totals potentially represent a double counting of participants who have accessed the session multiple times. Additionally, some clubs also merged participant numbers and impact from other programmes, which they operate in parallel to Extra Time.

To counteract and reduce the bias stemming from the above, Substance has also conducted focus groups and interviews with families, staff members, and school headteachers to hear their first-hand experiences and perspectives. This approach helps provide context and additional information to supplement findings from the survey. In terms of sampling, it must also be noted that a purposeful sampling technique was used and, therefore, the people interviewed may not represent the entirety of the Extra Time programme. There are three underlying reasons for this. Firstly, clubs were selected on the basis of their previous evidence of positive impact on the themes of interest (school attendance/ attainment, tackling poverty, improving child health and wellbeing). Secondly, the families were selected by the clubs themselves, possibly wanting to present the best examples of their programme delivery. Lastly, based on the breadth of the programme, the sample size is relatively small. As such, it cannot be considered representative of the entire Extra Time programme.

Extra Time Delivery

How Extra Time is Delivered

The Scottish FA provided Substance with a spreadsheet indicating where, how, and what each club delivers as part of the Extra Time programme. Clubs deliver breakfast clubs and after schools sessions over the regular term time, as well as sessions over the holiday period. The sessions are delivered weekly, creating stability for participants, parents, carers, teachers and other partners.

Out of the thirty clubs delivering Extra Time, all clubs delivered after school sessions during regular term time, eleven of these also offer breakfast clubs. During school holiday periods, all clubs offer holiday provision in line with Extra Time programme guidelines, which includes bespoke Extra Time holiday camps/sessions as well as clubs providing funded places to their existing holiday activity programmes for Extra Time participants.

Healthy food provision is central to both the breakfast clubs and after school sessions. If the afterschool sessions are not held within the school, some clubs offer transport to the children to take them to the secondary location, where normally a healthy snack or hot meal is provided. Activities at these sessions normally include physical activity, such as football, rounders, basketball, table tennis, as well as arts and crafts, quizzes, and other games and seasonal activities.

During the school holidays, the children attending the sessions may receive breakfast, hot lunch and, in some cases, a takeaway meal each day. These holiday camps normally involve a variety of physical activity, while offering sustenance and transport for participants. A number of families participating in the Extra Time programme have been identified and/or referred by the schools who work in tandem with the clubs organising the sessions. The clubs also engage directly with local partners and organisations to extend the club’s outreach, making sure it reaches the communities, especially in high SIMD areas.

Substance spoke to staff at the Scottish FA to gain a better understanding into the nature of delivering the Extra Time programme. One staff member highlighted the breadth of different clubs involved in the programme and how the Scottish FA share best practice and **facilitate clubs learning** from each other:

“The nature of the programme is that they are all so different, with a breadth of experience, so they are able to drive this work. They understand what outcomes we are looking to meet and we can also help them understand what best practice is occurring at other clubs so they can learn from each other. This occurs at regional forums and helps to create more effective programmes and encourage knowledge sharing.”

Scottish FA staff, Interview

When asked if the Scottish FA and clubs are best placed to deliver a programme that provides organised activity like Extra Time, multiple staff members emphasised the deep rooted **responsibility** and **connection that clubs have to communities**:

“The clubs are well placed to deliver Extra Time as they are embedded within the communities they are servicing. Football and the club badge, provide a mechanism to connect with families in a way that other agencies can’t.”

Scottish FA staff, Interview

“Clubs are at the heart of the community. They aren’t just delivering programmes, they have a wider reach. They have an earned trust with families. They feel a shared responsibility for the people who are part of the programmes, and the club itself.”

Scottish FA staff, Interview

Headline Attendance Numbers

Quarter	Term Time	Holiday Period	Term Time (ASN)	Holiday Period (ASN)
Apr – Jun (Q1)	3,272	1,795	367	172
Jul – Sep (Q2)	3,099	3,541	575	270
Oct – Dec (Q3)	4,175	1,868	650	234
Jan – Mar (Q4)	4,258	1,000	605	211

Table 3: Attendance numbers of children and children with additional support needs (ASN) per quarter.

The above table shows the number of children attending Extra Time during term time and the holiday periods. This data was self-reported by clubs.

The table represents the number of children accessing the Extra Time programme, as reported by clubs. As such, the children participating in each quarter are likely to be recounted. Similarly, the same children could be counted more than once during term time and holiday periods. Therefore, the figures above cannot be summed to give a precise count of children supported by the programme throughout the entire year.

However, given the numbers provided by clubs, we can estimate the programme has supported an average of around 3,500 children in each quarter during term time and around 2,000 children in each quarter during the holiday periods.

Views

During phase two of the Extra Time programme, all clubs were given access to the Views software platform. Views was introduced to help clubs monitor, evaluate and report on their activities in greater depth than the current online club quarterly reporting survey. One of the advantages of using Views is that individual participant information can be collected. This allows for a more accurate figure to be generated regarding the number of unique children attending Extra Time in a given time period. Therefore, this would reduce known issues of double counting in attendance figures and allow for a better understanding of the number of children attending the Extra Time programme.

To date (May 2025), eight Views training sessions were provided to clubs and further support has been made available through online videos and a support helpline. Attendance to each Views training session has ranged from fifteen to twenty-five clubs. Thirty clubs have logged on to Views to record Extra Time data, which has increased from twenty-three in the previous month. Seven clubs have over fifteen participant records in their accounts, showing that they have started to use the system to input data. Once all clubs have inputted participant data into Views, which is expected to be at the end of the first quarter (April-June 2025) of phase three of the Extra Time programme, Substance will be able to detail the number of unique children attending the Extra Time programme over a given time period. Substance will continue to provide the Scottish FA and clubs with support regarding the use of Views moving forward, including onboarding new clubs and providing additional support where necessary.

Extra Time Delivery

Successes

This section looks at the successes clubs have had in relation to the delivery of their Extra Time programmes. In the club quarterly reporting survey a number of topics were mentioned by club staff members as being key to facilitating the successful delivery of Extra Time. They included:

Skilled and well-trained staff

The importance of enthusiastic and compassionate staff who understand the needs of children was repeatedly emphasised. Staff training and upskilling were also noted as key to successful programme delivery:

“Compassionate, well-trained staff team who understand the context our young people live in.”

Club staff member, Survey

“High-calibre trained staff.”

Club staff member, Survey

Safe and inclusive environments

Creating a safe space where children and parents/carers feel supported, respected, and welcome was consistently highlighted. Club staff members mentioned that this was an important aspect of the programme that improves the experience of Extra Time for children and parents/carers:

“The programme is a safe place, and we just try to make it an enjoyable experience for everyone in attendance.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Having a welcoming registration process especially when including new participants to ensure their experience of the program is as positive as possible.”

Club staff member, Survey

Child and family voice

Listening to the voices of children and their families and incorporating their input into the design of Extra Time programmes was seen as important for the future development and delivery of the programme. Multiple clubs mentioned the importance of receiving input from children - noting that it provides them with a sense of ownership over the programme:

“To deliver activity provision successfully we have continued to plan in advance and have as much input from the children as possible.”

Club staff member, Survey

“By allowing the child and families a voice in the program it allows us to be flexible to support the families that use it.”

Club staff member, Survey

“We had a participant consultation to get new ideas that would engage them. We looked at a variety of different topics from physical activity indoor activity evening meals and snack options; this gives the children a sense of ownership of what is being delivered and gives them an opportunity to express likes and dislikes.”

Club staff member, Survey

When completing the quarterly club reporting survey, club staff members are asked of the successes they have had in engaging with stakeholders. Similarly to the previously published [Extra Time Annual Impact report](#), many clubs mentioned their ongoing strong relationships with schools. **Collaborations and relationships with schools** and their staff members was seen as important for the development and impact of clubs Extra Time programmes:

Stakeholder engagement, especially with schools, has been instrumental in enhancing the impact of the Extra Time programme on the families we support. By working closely with school staff we’ve gained a deeper understanding of the programme objectives leading to more inclusive and effective implementation.”

Club staff member, Survey

“As we already have strong relationships with many schools across [name of local authority], we find a lot of success working directly with schools individually in order for us to identify each school’s children and family needs.”

Club staff member, Survey

For many clubs, **having regular communication** with schools was important to continually providing high quality support through Extra Time:

“Through all of our relationships with stakeholders, we find communicating regularly is so important for us to continue to strive to provide the highest quality programmes and services across the region.”

Club staff member, Survey

Clubs have also highlighted how engaging with external stakeholders has enabled them to **reach families from target groups** (e.g. children from ethnic minority backgrounds and families in high SIMD areas).

“The partnership with our delivery partner has been a major achievement in providing young people from ethnic minority backgrounds the opportunity to play with the academy.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Another success has been our collaboration with local family support services and the local authority which has helped us to extend our reach and offer additional resources to families in need.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Our relationship with the whole family well-being worker has allowed for the opportunity to identify more families and to embed our services and the sessions we provide into the foundations of this novel whole-family approach to social work in the area. This has been a notable success from this quarter.”

Club staff member, Survey

Extra Time Delivery

Challenges

Within the quarterly club reporting survey, club staff members were asked to qualitatively detail any **risks** that they have identified for their Extra Time programmes and how they plan to manage or mitigate them.

From the data submitted, **staffing** continues to be a recurrent operational challenge that club staff members reported. Extra Time programmes rely on having the correct number of staff (in accordance with [Scottish FA guidelines](#)) to maintain quality and safety of delivery, with unexpected absences due to illness or staff leaving having a ripple effect. A number of clubs mentioned that rising costs and their associated pressures have affected staff recruitment and retention. Furthermore, multiple clubs expressed a desire to provide familiar staff at sessions ("same time, place, and face") and mentioned this as important for the delivery of Extra Time:

"There have been times where we've had a member of staff off with illness or on annual leave so it has left us short at points. We have decided that we need a minimum of three staff there at all times, no matter what."

Club staff member, Survey

"Although we have a full set of staff in our team, we understand there can be unexpected circumstances due to illness/annual leave."

Club staff member, Survey

"Due to janitorial staff shortages, there was the possibility of one class having to stop for good. The school building wasn't able to be open until 4pm due to staffing issues. We looked at moving the class and joining up with another local primary school. There would have been a risk in terms of walking/transporting the group of kids to the other school."

Club staff member, Survey



To manage this challenge, clubs explained how they have detailed rotas and schedules in place for staff. Some clubs hired new staff and volunteers which sometimes caused a delay in the delivery and/or promotion of Extra Time. As mentioned by a few clubs, staffing shortages are not only present in clubs but also within the schools that the Extra Time programme operates in. To mitigate this risk, a proactive approach was taken to understand issues before they might arise through further communication with schools.

"We manage and plan these risks by having rotas and schedules available for all staff and work to ensure all holidays or sickness is covered by staff at the club."

Club staff member, Survey

"We have implemented a proactive approach focusing on regular risk assessments and ongoing checks of resources, this allows us to quickly identify and address any potential issues before they arise."

Club staff member, Survey



The **behaviour** of children attending Extra Time remains a persistent challenge for many clubs. Issues raised ranged from bullying, displaying aggressive behaviours to club staff members and absconding:

"As with any setting involving large groups of children, bullying remains a key risk and school staff testify to this too."

Club staff member, Survey

"We have an ongoing risk of children being physically violent towards staff."

Club staff member, Survey



Extra Time Delivery

To manage behavioural challenges, clubs evidenced using a variety of methods. This included working with children one-on-one in an attempt to improve behaviour, enhanced training for staff, and additional collaboration with schools to understand any behavioural issues before they attend Extra Time:

“Consistent communication between club and school staff to ensure plans in place. Project lead would go to the school and get updates on behaviour during the day and then communicate with the staff team.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Our coaching team has received updated anti-bullying and safeguarding training with practical refreshers delivered too. We’ve also enhanced team ratios with staff and volunteers and created more breakout spaces to support better group dynamics.”

Club staff member, Survey

A lot of clubs identified the **uncertainty of funding** for the programme as a risk; this may be due to club staff members submitting data before the announcement of phase three of Extra Time:

“If funding were not to continue then the service would need to end.”

Club staff member, Survey

“The biggest risk is to understand that we can’t provide a service for all those within our community who need it and that Extra Time funding may not continue indefinitely.”

Club staff member, Survey



Multiple clubs highlighted that some families appear **reliant and dependent** on Extra Time, demonstrating how valuable and impactful the programme has been. However, this was seen as a challenge due to the uncertainty of the future funding that is required to continue running Extra Time:

“This is much needed provision and has had a huge impact on the families in the area. The thought of losing this funding/project worries parents who have become reliant on it.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Feedback from this quarter has highlighted the need for the project and how much families now rely on the service on a week-to-week basis.”

Club staff member, Survey



Clubs were also asked to reflect on any unexpected challenges they faced that could have caused slower progress or obstructed outcomes being achieved. The main theme, mentioned by multiple clubs, was the **high level of interest** and **high demand** for the Extra Time programme amongst schools and families:

“While there were no significant challenges, the high level of interest in the ‘schools’ out’ programme led to changes in staff levels which may have affected the overall quality of the product. The higher-than-expected participation resulted in a long waiting list necessitating additional volunteers and equipment.”

Club staff member, Survey

“Following high demand, we once again had to adapt to accommodate more children than expected. Through a strong local partnership with [name of partner club], we continue to get access to this additional facility at short notice. Their support helps ensure no child is turned away and sessions continue safely and smoothly.”

Club staff member, Survey

This sentiment was also found when interviewing families, as the following quotes from parent/carers highlight:

“Without this I wouldn’t be able to hold on to my current job, that’s how important it is to me.”

Parent/carer, Interview

“It [the Extra Time programme] really does help, me being on my own as a single parent. It lets me go back out and work again.”

Parent/carer, Interview

Extra Time Delivery

Improvements

Within the quarterly reporting survey, club staff members were asked to detail any lessons they have learned and what improvements they will make to their Extra Time programmes moving forward. Multiple clubs mentioned the importance of **planning and co-ordinating time** to be able to deliver Extra Time effectively:

"We have learned that quite a lot of planning and co-ordination time is required to plan in detail what we would like to deliver across the community. As we work with many stakeholders, getting new activity set up can take longer than expected due to waiting for responses from very busy headteachers or other stakeholders and, therefore, more time to pre-plan any new activity would be hugely beneficial."

Club staff member, Survey

Multiple clubs identified how they strive to provide **consistent, reliable** and **high-quality support for families**:

"The key lesson we have taken for the Extra Time funding is our commitment to consistent support for our participants and partners by providing a high-quality weekly programme that supports many different participant demographics, families, and schools. We have taken the time to develop a programme in a collaborative manner which has allowed us to feel very comfortable that we can deliver this programme until the end of this academic year and further."

Club staff member, Survey

The need for, and importance of, **creating a safe space** where children can openly communicate with their peers and coaches was also mentioned by club staff members:

"We have learnt that we need to provide more safe spaces for children to talk to their peers or the coaches to give more freedom for children to feel they can discuss things that are both personal and impersonal..."

Club staff member, Survey

Furthermore, some clubs mentioned the importance of **identifying new families** and trying to **improve the accessibility** of the programme to ensure that target families are able to attend. As one club explained:

"We have learnt the importance of identifying new participants so children and families in our local area get an equal opportunity to be involved with projects such as ours. We have learnt that having the same staff in place every day ensures children feel comfortable in the environment and it allows our staff to have great relationships with our participants. Some participants struggle with changes in routine or changes to the coaching team."

Club staff member, Survey

This consistency and reliability of the programme was also echoed by comments made by a Scottish FA staff member:

"We found that the more you did it, the more the parents went. 'Oh, they're still there. Oh, that's still exists.' So that and then four years later, parents can phone up and say, 'oh, are you doing the summer again? Are you doing that again' and then it becomes a bit of routine, which is important and really good for the schools as well."

Scottish FA staff, Interview

Overall, in the last quarter (Q4, January to March 2025), 50% of club staff members said that their club have made (or intend to make) changes to their Extra Time provision. Many clubs mentioned that they are looking to **increase or have increased their Extra Time delivery**:

"We will be adding an additional after-school session and two breakfast club sessions."

Club staff member, Survey

The mention of increased Extra Time delivery was mostly related to the high demand for the project and not in relation to the minimum delivery criteria that will come in to affect for phase three of the programme.

To improve their Extra Time programme, multiple clubs have now integrated bespoke training to staff in relation to neurodiversity and disabilities, with one club mentioning the launch of a new mentorship initiative:

"To be even more impactful, we are currently training our staff to become mentors to individual children. The goal of mentoring is to help the mentee learn and develop. This relationship will focus on growing complex skills such as positive peer relationships, confidence, self-esteem, and setting realistic goals for the future."

Club staff member, Survey

"We have included trauma-informed training as part of extra time this quarter and will continue to broaden the training of staff next quarter by incorporating neurodiversity and disability training."

Club staff member, Survey

Another club highlighted how they have changed the name of their Extra Time sessions in order to encourage better attendance by emphasising the **non-competitive and social aspect of the programme**:

"We gave one of our morning classes a fresh title to encourage better attendance. This is in an area of high deprivation where the school struggles for consistent attendance rates. We highlighted a more social aspect of the classes to entice people to come along with a friend which might make them more comfortable entering that environment."

Club staff member, Survey

One of the main themes in the data was the importance of **forming relationships with families** and how it takes **time** to get to know them and their needs:

"It takes time to engage with parents and carers to get under the skin of their needs."

Club staff member, Survey

Case Studies

The following section showcases three thematic case studies on topics that emerged from the previously published [Extra Time Annual Impact report](#). The three topics are the potential impact of the Extra Time programme on: school attendance and attainment, tackling poverty and improving child health and wellbeing.

School Attendance and Attainment

Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups with club staff members, coaches, headteachers and families provide evidence for how the Extra Time programme is positively impacting children's school attendance and attainment.

Multiple data sources gave examples that children are **more eager to attend school** when they have an Extra Time session to look forward to:

"Parents agreed that their children are more eager to go to school in the morning if they know they have a session/club afterschool. Attending sessions introduces them to other children and then they are more likely to play with them in the playground as a 'byproduct' of the activities."
Club staff member, Survey

"You usually see a wee group of them, about five or six of them, just before 8:30, already desperate to come in [to the Extra Time session] and they just come in, put their bags away, and they're straight into the hall to see everybody."
Headteacher, Interview

One coach explained the positive benefits of having a breakfast club and an after school club which effectively 'sandwiches' the school day, with having Extra Time sessions as a **fun activity** for children to look forward to:

"In terms of just getting them in for breakfast, it kind of gets them in the door. It gets them fed. I finish pretty much when the bell goes, so then they'll just go straight to class from there. Just being in a breakfast club means they're going to be in for at least the start of the day."

Then obviously the after-school club, I'd like to think the kids look forward to when they enjoy coming out. So, then it's maybe a case of, 'I just need to get through the day now and get 2 hours of fun at the after-school club'. So, I think it's the fact your school day is almost sandwiched in between our two clubs."

Club staff member, Interview



Furthermore, a headteacher in a school where Extra Time sessions take place reported an **improvement in pupil attendance** since the programmes has taken place:

"I would say on the whole you get about 95% of them attending in the mornings, which is great for our attendance because the children know that when they're coming in there's something fun to do before school starts and overall our attendance is pretty good."
Headteacher, Interview

"From comments from staff, it [school attendance] has definitely improved. And I can only say that that's possibly because of the access to a breakfast club for parents because they know that if they come along to the club and some children are there before the club even opens in the morning, they're excited to get in, which is great."
Headteacher, Interview

One club detailed how they introduced a small incentive to try and improve school attendance and attainment during the day. A 'player of the day' of the day initiative was introduced, with the coach below describing how they have seen the impact on pupil attending Extra Time:

"So even at the after school clubs we've just introduced a 'player of the day' type thing. So there were three winners at yesterday's after school club and I've now got to choose the snack for next week's after school club and there'll be different rewards and different points awarded... but even seeing that yesterday and one of the winners was one of the troublemakers, and he had completely flipped the switch and had just gone for it."

So from the morning he knew that we were now bringing this in and he was completely fine all the way through school. We do notice that now that we're making that change, that the attitudes they have to school are changing."

Headteacher, Interview

Club staff members also shared anecdotal evidence that their Extra Time programmes were **improving the school attendance of pupils**, especially those with low school attendance. These club staff members also highlighted the social aspects of the programme:

"We have had many reports of the positive impact on the project emotionally helping children interact with others on a social level, taking part in physical activity and helping those who have poor school attendance."
Club staff member, Interview



Case Studies

The below case study example shows the impact of Extra Time on school attendance and attainment for one school:

A headteachers' perspective on the impact of Extra Time on school attendance

At a primary school in the Highlands, the headteacher reflected on how the Extra Time programme has had an impact on pupils' attendance:

"We've seen quite significant [improvements] in some of our kids. Kids who were sitting at 50/60% attendance are now up into the 70/80%."

Headteacher, Interview

For children who previously showed less interest in coming to school, the lure of participating in Extra Time on designated days has become a motivator:

"The kids who didn't want to come to school, they never miss a Tuesday and a Thursday ever. They might miss a Monday, Wednesday or a Friday, but they will never miss a Tuesday or a Thursday."

Headteacher, Interview

The Headteacher also recalls one pupil in particular, a boy who had low attendance and was disengaged from school. Through the support of the school and 1 to 1 support from Extra Time staff he has made significant progress:

"The ones [children] whose attendance was low, we have seen vast improvement. One boy in particular, who just didn't come to school and wasn't engaged in school, has made a year and six months' progress. But that's the Cali boys [Extra Time staff] have been working with him a lot and doing 1-to-1s."

Headteacher, Interview

The hook of having a football club come in to the school to run Extra Time sessions and the professionalism of the staff and the set up was seen by the headteacher as a reason why the programme was well attended and having an impact on school attendance:

"Just the sheer fact that the kids are in school more is really positive to see as a teacher. I think it's the hook of the football club and you've got players and coaches coming in, it feels like a professional set up and that's why I think the children and parents like it."

Headteacher, Interview



Tackling Poverty

Substance used data from surveys, focus groups and interviews with club staff members, coaches, headteachers and families to provide evidence for how the Extra Time programme is addressing the poverty issues affecting participants and their families.

Employment

Clubs were asked what role Extra Time has at their clubs in supporting parents and caregivers. One of the main topics that arose was the issue around **employment**, and **in-work poverty**. According to the Scottish Governments Working Poverty Analysis (2019), in-work poverty describes households who live in relative poverty even though someone in the household is in paid work. Between 2021-24, it was estimated that 75% of children in relative poverty after housing costs were living in working households ([Scottish Government, Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2021-24](#)). This issue was not necessarily considered a primary concern for most clubs until they began Extra Time. One staff member remarked on the prevalence of this issue within his club:

"One of the things we've assumed was that parents would have 40 hour a week jobs. And what we found is that's not the case. The families you're dealing with see if they pick up 10 hours a week, one day a week or work a part time job, that's success..."

We've got a lot of single mothers, we've got a lot of families that are split but can actually now take on casual work, because they know the regularity of the childcare programme is there now."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Employment

This sentiment was echoed by a parent who was interviewed about the impact of the programme on her ability to work and provide **additional support** for her son:

"It's a fantastic opportunity for myself because I'm a single parent and it lets me get out to work and make money for me and my family. Also, it's helped my son so much because he's obviously got his own disability."

Parent, Interview

Employment

Clubs recognised the importance of employment issues and understanding the individual circumstances of families involved with Extra Time. For clubs who work in high Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) areas, the focus was more centred around providing holistic support and **developing close relationships** with parents/carers:

"We've been delivering it for four years and we now have a family engagement officer. So we had all the delivery, but we felt we had to get to know the families a bit better, get good contact with the schools, good contact with the participants. So we employed a family engagement officer. That's probably the biggest breakthrough we've had, it allows us to drill into the detail."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Case Studies

Employment

This point surrounding SIMD areas and their needs was echoed by a club, who went on to describe the variability of the areas they serve and how they try to adhere to community needs within the programme:

"I think from our point of view, for the delivery we've taken an approach of doing it within a rural area and a built up area, but also within SIMD areas that are reflective of the poverty need. But we're also delivering within schools that have been shown to be in work poverty. So a lot of parents who may be working, but don't have the funds to be able to do extra activity or extend the school day.

So we're picking up quite a bit of that as well. I think the biggest thing for us is the variety of different schools that we've got and working within. It gives us an affordability to deliver to the needs of what each individual school is requiring to be met."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Employment

With the prevalence of employment issues mentioned by clubs insights were gained from parents whose children were active participants in the Extra Time programme. When the issue around money and working was raised one parent provided insight into how being able to access Extra Time places for her children has improved her household income and has had a positive impact for her children, who were previously indifferent to these types of programmes :

"I mean, I'm a single parent now too, and I only work part time and the costs do build up. So for a while, my kids were going to a club and I was paying for it. Then, I took them and they decided they didn't want to go and I'm paying over £50 a week, each month. And then I'm like 'well, wait a minute - if you really don't want to go, you can't just chop and change'. The advantage is because the kids are enjoying and it is free, I'm not having to stress about where I'm going to find that £50 for this month's club - you're saving all this money...It does add up."

Parent, Focus Group



Respite

Parents/carers reported that the Extra Time programme has been helpful in providing parents/carers with needed respite in a multitude of ways. With regard to parents/carers, the **after school programme** element means that they have additional time during the day for themselves. One parent touched upon this in an interview with our researchers:

"It's so good because even if I finish work early, I can go home, do what I need to do, cook dinner, and I just don't have to think about it. Even before, when my mum looked after him, it was her stress; I just don't have to pick him up so I know he's going to be picked up by Extra Time."

Parent, Interview

Respite

Another parent who was interviewed and asked about the impact of having such respite spoke candidly about how the programme **provides comfort** in knowing that her child is able to be looked after, when she needs it:

"I do obviously suffer a bit of mental health as well but, you know, it's very comforting. He's [my son] being looked after and he's getting a nice hot cooked meal, you know, especially in the winter as well...It does help me that I know that he's being looked after."

Parent, Interview

Respite

Clubs mentioned that parents/caregivers tended to have personal circumstances at home outside of their day-to-day responsibilities. A club staff member provided an example of one particular child whose blend of responsibilities during a difficult time period have been eased by access to the Extra Time programme and, as a result, has enacted a positive impact on his parents' wellbeing as well:

"We've done a survey of our participants and the parents to see the benefits that they were having. One of the pieces of feedback we got was in terms of that support, one of the parents filled out a form and told us that their son attends the sessions and that they're also a young carer to his terminally ill father and the house. So they mentioned that the extra hour that he gets at school.

To participate in our football sessions just allows him that respite of not having to deal with the home challenges that he faces, and he can be with his school mates obviously and the mum says it gives her an extra an extra bit of time to focus on her home care and responsibilities. Combined with our work commitments where she doesn't have to worry about where her child is, if he's safe, or if he's ok - she knows that he's in care and it allows that extra support that she can give to her husband."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Case Studies



Food Poverty

Staff and parents were also asked to outline whether the Extra Time programme has contributed to tackling food insecurities and food poverty issues. The importance of the food provisions provided by clubs to children **receiving meals regularly** was highlighted during the focus group.

“One of the biggest things that’s evolved in our project as we’ve gone through... is household poverty and food poverty in particular. Probably within the ‘childcare’ [aspect of our delivery], this is potentially where some of these young children are getting food, they’re not getting food in their household.

We’re also finding that there’s a bit of stigma at times around the food stuff. So there’s a school in particular where there’s a real reluctance for some of the families to ask for support and they don’t like walking out the door with a food package. So we try to get them vouchers instead.”

Club staff member, Focus Group

Food Poverty

This was echoed in the survey responses with insight gathered from a child who attends with their sibling:

“I love coming to the club with my brother now before and after school as I know I will get something for breakfast and tea.”

Club staff member recalling a quote from a child participant, Survey

Food Poverty

One issue that clubs across the board have sought to address centres upon food provisions and the **stigma** that might arise in association. During the focus group, clubs expressed how the early phases of Extra Time were key to understanding which children were most in need of food provision. Clubs detailed how they would try not to ‘single out’ children who are in particular need for food because this would create an environment where they were less likely to come forward to receive support.

This was also consistent with parents, who expressed concern with having to self-identify as needing food provision. Below is one example of how a club believe they were able to **reduce the stigma around food**:

“We found that’s huge, everyone having the same food at the same time. Everyone sits in a room.... We put the list together. Everyone works together. But just being able to take the stigma away and having 10-15, however many you’ve got in the room, just sitting down and being able to eat without any pressure, without any worry, without anyone looking around, we found that’s been the biggest change.

So we’re now at a point where if someone was in food poverty, you wouldn’t know because it’s not as if one kid is getting eight or nine things and one kid is getting one thing because everyone knows they can get the same. And if they don’t want it, they can offer it to somebody else. And we’ve found that’s been a huge impact.”

Club staff member, Focus Group

Food Poverty

The **timing of the programme** is also key to providing food provisions for parents and children. This was brought to the attention of a club staff member, particularly with regard to how Extra Time works to fill gaps in the afternoon for food provision where there typically would not be capacity to do so:

“So Extra Time allows us to put on breakfast clubs, which we don’t do because they’re already [being delivered] in the school, but we run our Extra Time clubs from 3-5, not 3-4. So even after school activities traditionally run 3-4, we run 3-5 and include the food in that package... it gives a peace of mind. My child’s been fed. So even if you’re on your knees and you don’t have any money at all, at least you know your child’s had lunch at school and dinner at school.”

Club staff member, Staff Interview



Case Studies

The below case study example showcases how engagement with the Extra Time programme has helped clubs to tackle issues surrounding food poverty:

Improving food choices through the Extra Time programme

When asked about the impact of Extra Time on food provisions for children at their club, a club staff member detailed an example of the severity of food poverty issues at their club, highlighting how it is not just about getting children healthy food, sometimes it's about getting them to eat anything at all.

“So one little boy in particular that we get from a school – he only goes to school from 9:00 till 10:30 every day because he doesn't cope well in a classroom setting. So he sits with his hood up the whole time, but on the days that he comes to us, he goes in at lunch time and he can persevere with the time till 15:00 because he knows he's coming in with us. He's absolutely brilliant. He's like a different boy and his mum's like, 'it's been brilliant for him because otherwise he would be sitting at home'.

We've had messages to say 'he's fallen asleep on the bus...he's been on his tablet all night'. And again, that's not an issue with her (his mum). These children are not going to bed at a normal bed time. They're not eating a normal breakfast, their diets are pretty poor, and not through poor parenting choices.

I think, because the parents have more than one kid, it's tricky for them to navigate their way into getting them to eat healthy meals. That's where we come in and we are proven that what we are doing is obviously working. You know, he'll eat pizza and chips with us. He might not have the healthy option, but he'll have the pizza and chips. But it's better than him eating the exact same snack, which is basically all he does all day, every day. So it's that dynamic as well. So that's a confidence boost in it for him.

Obviously, he's proud of himself because he's actually eating pizza and chips, whereas he's had a staple diet of the same snack for goodness knows how long. I mean, until you get into the guts of it and you're actually working in it, you don't actually realise how severe these problems are.”

Club Staff, Focus Group



Improving Child Health and Wellbeing

One of the emerging topics from the previous [Extra Time Annual Impact report](#) was understanding whether the Extra Time programme has contributed to helping improve children's and young people's health and wellbeing, both in and out of school. A number of subtopics arose as a result of analysing the interviews, focus groups and surveys conducted. Primarily, themes surrounding mental health and wellbeing, as well as confidence and social skills were prominent.



Case Studies

Mental Wellbeing

The impact of Extra Time on the mental wellbeing of participants and their families, was consistently highlighted by staff and parents alike. It has taken time for some clubs to develop relationships with children on what they may be facing at home/outside of school. The below was highlighted during a staff focus group, demonstrating how crucial it can be for clubs to have an **open dialogue with external organisations**, in order to better support their participants' mental health and wellbeing:

"It's getting the human relationship and building their confidence again. We also obviously take a lot of our information from the Health and Social Care Partnership and our local council as well. As much as we get information from them, it doesn't always marry up. So sometimes the information we get from the school doesn't necessarily match what the information is that we've been given from a social worker or the counsellor."

We just have to take that as it comes. But on the whole, the schools are very, very transparent, they're brilliant and they've absolutely seen how successful the programme has been. So now, they want to deal with us more, which is incredible."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Mental Wellbeing

The impact of having data that can inform decisions was seen as important by multiple clubs. Collecting such data is not always straightforward but, when made available, it provides scope for tangible measures around what impact has been made, and what behaviour changes have occurred, since the programme began. One club has been proactive in attempting to **understand the journey of participants' mental health and wellbeing** and how that has impacted their ability in schools, and beyond the classroom:

"One of the things that we identified was around the mental well-being of the young people who are attending, but also their attendance within classes has improved, their attainments have improved, and their mental health and well-being has improved through surveys we've done with parents, teachers etc. So from our point of view, you're seeing the clear evidence of that. You're seeing the benefits that it is doing."

A lot of people don't understand or realise outside of the work what we do about truancy within primary school age kids. We've got reports back of young people who don't go to school, and they will come in on days that the football sessions are on and they'll stay for the full day. So we're getting reports from teachers saying that behaviour within classes is better. They're [pupils] more attentive and active."

The project was initially set for extending the school day and to give an opportunity for parents to work longer and kids being in a safe environment. But it's been it's turned into so much more than that."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Confidence and Social Skills

This example from the club above was further expanded on in their survey to highlight the extent to which **coaches are seeing changes in the children they work with** across the board:

"The greatest success this quarter has been the noted improvements in confidence/health and wellbeing of the children. The coach/teacher/parent feedback has overall been superb. The coaches are seeing significant improvements in coordination and focus across the sessions. the children are engaging as a peer group and willing to support each other more during challenging times. This includes offer regulation support during emotional struggles."

A couple of children with additional support needs (ASN) have settled and found their own place within some sessions which has improved the application during the school with marked improved in attitude and behaviour during the day."

Club staff member, Survey

Confidence and Social Skills

It is clear that there is overlap between topics relating to mental wellbeing and the social aspect of the programme, namely regarding **peer-to peer-interactions, the willingness to try new things and being more confident to engage with activities from children themselves**. One parent spoke openly about the positive effect that being around peers has had on her son:

"He's made a lot more friends. Before Extra Time, my mum would be taking him from school, so he would go to school, then to his gran and then back home, but with Extra Time he's able to spend much more time with other children. He doesn't seem as grumpy either. In this area, there's not a lot of kids so he doesn't always get a chance to go out and play, so Extra Time is really good for that."

Parent, Interview

Confidence and Social Skills

In terms of confidence, **clubs have consistently reported improvements for children in their programmes** across surveys and focus groups / interviews. Not only do they report on improvements in social skills and interacting with their peers, but also in their own confidence in participating in physical activity events in schools - where they may previously have been less confident. The topic of improvements in children's **physical literacy** was brought forward in a focus group:

"It's just like on the confidence part in that, there's also the physical literacy that improves and we've had a few children that come along that might be a primary three or a primary four or primary five, but because of their home situation their physical literacy is more like a primary one or a primary two because they just don't move, they don't run, they're not active. So now that we're 18 months into the programme, we are seeing 10 year old kids who can keep up with their age group, when their physical literacy standard was more like that of a four year old."

Club staff member, Focus Group

Case Studies

The below case study showcases the impact of the Extra Time programme on improving children and young people's health and wellbeing:

The social benefits of attending breakfast clubs within Extra Time programme

When reporting on the impacts of the Extra Time programme during the focus groups, a staff member at one club reflected on how one particular child with a difficult home life has turned their behaviour around:

“We have one individual who came to us after a very challenging divorce for his parents and it happened over the summer and the overall behavioural levels completely changed. So he was coming to us through his father because he needed it for employment, but his mother was against him coming to the programme, so it was a bit of a struggle at the start.

The child accesses our breakfast club so that dad can start his work at 8:15 and he was having to lose an hour a week for childcare before it came along. And then he could get him to breakfast club, which he was only losing him half an hour a week.

This child would be swearing, shouting, hanging from the basketball net, jumping all over the foldable tables and chairs, being disruptive on a consistent basis at the start of the programme.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago, I went in and did the breakfast club and he brought in some toys and sat down with all of the kids, they all sat and, instead of playing football or colouring in, they all sat and played with the toys on the stage at the school. Myself and the other coaches just stood back, sat down and let them go.

We sat and reflected on the fact that a year ago this would never have happened. Nine months ago - it would never have happened. Six months ago - it would never have happened. But this one child is happy to just come in and interact with his peers and join in whenever he wants to join in. And the most important point is he's comfortable with all the other people playing with his toys, which just would not have happened at the start of the programme.”

Club staff member, Focus group



Conclusion

To conclude, from the clubs self-reporting on the number of children accessing the Extra Time programme, we can assume that the programme has supported an average of around 3500 children in each quarter during term time and approximately 2000 children in each quarter during the holiday periods. To aid with data capture and evaluation, the Views software was rolled out over phase two, with the intention to provide more accurate figures, specifically in relation to individual unique attendances, and to help clubs report on data.

To date, all clubs have been given access to the Views software and have been provided with training, with many starting to input Extra Time data. Future evaluation support should look to continually assist clubs in all aspects of monitoring and evaluation, including providing further training on the Views software where necessary.

The Extra Time programme is mostly delivered in the form of breakfast clubs and after school sessions in term time. After reviewing data captured by the Scottish FA, although football is a key part of Extra Time, clubs also delivered a variety of activities and sports (e.g. rounders, basketball, arts and craft etc.). Clubs have designed their Extra Time sessions to be inclusive of children from different backgrounds and ages, whilst emphasising that sessions are fun, social and non-competitive.



Further research should more systematically explore what clubs are delivering during term time and holiday time, as well as the food provision being provided. It is anticipated that further information on the delivery of Extra Time will be provided by clubs in their proposals for phase three of Extra Time.

In relation to the successes of the delivery of the Extra Time programme, clubs mentioned the importance of having skilled and well-trained staff, safe and inclusive environments and listening to the voice of children and families in the design of their programmes. Similar to the findings discussed in the Annual Impact Report, strong collaborations and relationships with schools appear to be essential to facilitate the successful delivery of Extra Time. To examine this further, research could investigate the different elements of their service that clubs have changed after listening to feedback from children and families, whilst also looking into what makes Extra Time programmes a safe and inclusive space for participants.

The key challenges and risks that clubs face in delivering their Extra Time programmes included challenges with staff numbers, the behaviour of participants and uncertainty around funding. One of the primary unexpected challenges reported by clubs was the high interest and demand for the Extra Time programme, providing evidence to support why the programme is needed whilst also reinforcing the challenge to meet demand. Clubs evidenced a variety of ways that they deal with behavioural issues, including enhanced specialist training. With behaviour acting as one of the main challenges faced by many clubs, it may be worth exploring how clubs can share learning with each other on appropriate methods to address behaviour-related issues. With respect to the uncertainty around funding, phase three of the Extra Time programme has since been confirmed. However, where possible, more advanced notice should be given to clubs and long-term funding models explored.



The three thematic case studies presented provide evidence for the potential impact of Extra Time on school attendance/attainment, tackling poverty and improving child health and wellbeing. Through interviewing headteachers, coaches, club staff and families, there was anecdotal evidence of improved school attendance from children who attend Extra Time, especially from those that had previous low school attendance. Extra Time was seen as a fun activity with children said to be more eager to go to school when they have a session to look forward to. Extra Time being free at the point of access for targeted primary school children from low income families, as well as the providing of food, were key elements which were considered as helping to tackle poverty, with clubs also actively trying to reduce stigma around food insecurities. Clubs involved in the case study research also highlighted the positive impacts of Extra Time in relation to perceived improvements in mental wellbeing, social skills and confidence. Future evaluation research should continue to explore emerging topics such as school attendance, tackling poverty and child health and wellbeing longitudinally. Clubs involved in case study research were self-selected based on previously evidencing potential impacts around target topic areas. Further research should reflect upon the sampling approach used and involve more families in the evaluation, so findings are better representative of the programme as a whole.

When trying to improve their Extra Time programmes, club staff members mentioned the importance of planning and preparation, as well as creating safe spaces for children. Many clubs mentioned that they have increased, or are looking to increase, their Extra Time delivery, with a focus on providing consistent, reliable and high quality support for families. Clubs also highlighted that it takes time to form relationships with families; this was seen as key to trying to improve the programme and evaluation data collected. Although clubs were able to articulate key lessons learnt and the importance of certain factors for successful delivery, insight regarding specific improvements that they could embed were less prevalent. Further research may want to review how questions are posed in the club reporting survey and, in turn, additional primary data could be collected via interviews and focus groups.

Next Steps

The partnership between the Scottish FA and Scottish Government has now been extended into a third phase, covering the extension of Extra Time throughout the period of April 2025 to March 2026. Phase three of Extra Time will look to expand to more clubs, further expanding the reach and impact of the programme.

Increased investment from the Scottish Government will grow the local authority coverage, therefore allowing access to organised activity to a greater number of children and families. The investment will also strengthen the existing delivery models, highlighting the Scottish Government’s and the Scottish FA’s commitment to using the ‘power of football’ to benefit the country’s communities.

Throughout the new phase, The Scottish FA will continually monitor and evaluate the process of delivering Extra Time, and the impact it is having, using the findings from the previously published Annual Impact report and the current report, with learning being utilised to continue to enhance and develop the programme to ensure effective and impactful delivery.



CITATION

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CONTACT

Substance Ltd, Jactin House, 24 Hood Street, Manchester, M4 6WX
www.substance.net **research@substance.net**



substance.