

# A level playing field

Why we need a new school enrichment guarantee and how to deliver it

August 2021

# Summary

## Our most disadvantaged pupils face a barrage of adversity, made worse by the pandemic

Children are disengaging from school at frightening pace: in autumn 2020, the number of pupils who were severely absent soared by 54.7 per cent year-on-year. Disadvantaged pupils already faced an 18-month GCSE attainment gap before Covid, which could now grow. Mental health problems are spiralling - the rate of probable disorders among children rose from 1 in 9 in 2017 to 1 in 6 in 2020. One in five young people is obese by age 17, a problem that is particularly acute for disadvantaged children. Youth crime is ripping through our communities and as gangs continue to exploit generation Covid, more could join the roster of 27,000 children who currently self-identify as gang members.

## An extended school day, with access to extra-curricular activity, would temper these challenges and support a more rounded education

As we outline in this short paper, the evidence suggests pupils would engage more fully in their education and make more progress - both academically and more generally. They would recover their mental health. Their physical health, too, would improve as they fended off the damaging clutches of obesity. And they would be safer - both by avoiding the 4-6pm window when half of under-16 stabbings occur, and because extra-curricular programmes move children away from gangs.

## We have tried extending the school day before, with highly promising results

The 'extended services in schools' programme between 2003-2010 provides us with a deep reservoir of evidence to support this. According to an evaluation of 1,500 schools that extended their days (97 per cent of which offered activities including sport, music, arts/crafts, study support, volunteering and business/enterprise activities as part of their offer):

- 71 per cent of schools reported this helped them engage disadvantaged families;
- 69 per cent found it had at least some influence in raising attainment;
- 82 per cent reported greater pupil enjoyment of school;
- 45 per cent noted improved pupil attendance;
- 54 per cent said it reduced behaviour or discipline problems;
- 31 per cent saw a reduced number of exclusions; and
- 68 per cent observed a stronger links between schools and their communities.

## Recent initiatives to boost enrichment in disadvantaged areas have also worked well

In 2020, the DfE published an evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme - a £21.75 million project which ran between 2018-2019 in the DfE's 12 Opportunity Areas, and aimed to improve access to extra-curricular activities (including sports, arts, debating and information technology) for pupils aged 5-18 in disadvantaged areas.

According to the evaluation, confidence, resilience, team working/building relationships and social and emotional skills were the most common outcomes experienced by young people. Participants were also more organised and committed - skills that families reported were lacking before - and schools reported positive changes in pupil behaviour, attendance and aspirations.

## New CSJ/YouGov polling shows that one in five primary and secondary pupils do no enrichment activities in an average week, rising to one in four pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

According to the results of the CSJ-YouGov polling exercise, one in five (19.6 per cent) parents in England report that their primary or secondary school children do no enrichment activities in an average week.<sup>1</sup> This rises to one in four of those in the lowest social grades (C2 and DE).

<sup>1</sup> The CSJ defined 'enrichment activities' as 'a wide variety of structured activities and clubs, such as: sports, music, art, drama, dance, outdoor/adventure, debating, volunteering, business/enterprise, tech/digital, and cooking.'

The polling also revealed a significant regional disparity in the take up of enrichment activities. Parents of pupils in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber were 2.5 and 3 times more likely than parents in London to report their children do not participate in enrichment activities in an average week.

There is only a small (and insignificant) difference in the participation in enrichment activities between primary and secondary school children.

### Some schools already extend their days, but not all schools have the resources to do this

In 2016, 34 per cent of state secondary schools already offered their pupils voluntary longer school days, and four per cent mandated them. And it is estimated that 70-80 per cent of independent schools have extended their school days (on average, private school pupils engage in three times as much sport per week as do state school pupils).

Schools with extended days draw on a variety of resources to make this happen - for example, school fees, user charges, state-school funding, local authority support, private sector support, free/subsidised support from charitable organisations, or staff volunteers. However, not all schools have the resources to extend their days. According to the 'extended school services' evaluation, the most common barrier to developing and delivering extended services was funding (63 per cent), followed by lack of available facilities or places (23 per cent) and lack of specialist staff (23 per cent).

### A majority of parents support a requirement for pupils to engage in additional hours of enrichment activities within a longer school day

According to a YouGov survey commissioned by the CSJ, there is considerable support for the policy of extending the school day specifically for enrichment activities.

Only 19 per cent of parents reject the idea, while 51 per cent support some time requirement for pupils to do enrichment activities outside of normal school hours, and 20 per cent of parents believe this should be left up to the school.

Parents from the lowest (DE) and highest (AB) socio-economic groups are similarly disposed to support a requirement.

Parents who selected a time requirement response in the survey were most likely to support between 30 and 60 minutes of enrichment activities per day.

### Government should introduce a new enrichment requirement in schools, and should provide them with appropriate funding to support this

#### Pupils

All primary and secondary pupils would be required to do at least 5 hours of extra-curricular enrichment every school week (excluding weekends). This figure complements the CSJ/YouGov polling outlined in this paper, according to which the highest proportion of parents who wanted a requirement for enrichment activity within a longer school day said that up to 60 minutes of daily enrichment activity was the right amount. Pupils who already engage in extra-curricular activities on school days would be able to offset the relevant hours against the core requirement.

The predictability of a mandatory requirement would make it easier for schools to plan their programmes. A non-mandatory model, on the other hand, would risk tempering engagement for disadvantaged pupils, the latter of whom are less likely to engage with optional enrichment programmes than their peers and, as the polling above showed, are already less likely to participate in enrichment activities in an average week. A non-mandatory offer could relegate the perceived importance of enrichment, rather than extolling its fundamental role at the core of a rounded education.

#### Schools

Schools would have a duty to meet the demand that flowed from the mandatory requirement for pupils outlined above. Schools would then claim back the commensurate value of this activity from DfE, up to a maximum ceiling (the latter of which would be determined by a formula). Ofsted would scrutinise the extent to which schools were meeting their new duty.

## Schools would need to build engaging programmes to avoid absence

While the mandatory nature of an enrichment programme would secure many pupils' participation, this would not be true for all pupils. The rate of absence in England's schools is already concerningly high; for instance, during the autumn 2020 term, 93,514 pupils were severely absent (i.e. they were missing 50 per cent or more of their possible sessions), compared to 60,244 the autumn before; this means the rate of severe school absence has risen by 54.7 per cent year-on-year; in some cases, general disengagement would simply seep into the new enrichment requirement.

There is evidence that proactive and effective communication with pupils and parents; offering a wide range of activities; tailoring activities to pupils' needs; and supporting ancillary costs (such as transport) would all improve engagement. It is, therefore, crucial that schools are given adequate resources to build rich, varied programmes. New CSJ/YouGov polling highlights the potential to engage families of pupils who do no enrichment activity per week; two in five parents of children who currently do no enrichment activities would support a time requirement for enrichment activities within the school day. It is also vital that schools accurately communicate to parents what is being proposed: a "longer school day" could very easily be interpreted as an extension of teacher instruction, whereas the model we propose would be predicated on enrichment.

## We should not ask teachers to shoulder an extended day, and should instead prime the community and voluntary sectors

### Organisations would need to scale up to meet new demand

The community/voluntary-driven sector has been trampled by the pandemic, and even prior to Covid-19 there was a relative dearth of local options in parts of the country. However, a secure, substantial funding stream from government to schools to fund new enrichment programmes would galvanise the market. 82 per cent of schools evaluated as part of the 'extended services in schools' programme reported that "there ha[d] been increased partnership working with other agencies and providers of community services as a result of extended services provision in this school."

### Government should appoint a stream of approved providers to help prime the market - this would run alongside the bulk of commissioning, which would take place through schools

Approved providers would receive direct grant funding from government. They would then market their offers to schools. From schools' perspective, an off-the-shelf option could help reduce red tape and reduce their commissioning workload. An approved provider list would also help to prime the provider market: providers that have the latent capacity to scale would be able to do this far quicker if they had a more predictable funding stream and if they spent less time on speculative approach work with schools, which can often be labour-intensive. Government should weigh the terms of its tender to support growth in the most disadvantaged areas where good options are scarcer. And DfE could ask providers to collect data, with a view to evaluating the impact of their services.

### Government should design a digital platform to help schools and providers build partnerships

A well-structured digital platform would help schools and providers match demand and supply more seamlessly (commissioning can currently be very ad hoc). A digital platform would also allow schools to rate providers and share feedback, therefore introducing better information into the market. Not all schools have enrichment programmes and for those who do not, or whose offer is nascent, this information would allow them to learn quickly.

## There should be a lag-time between the inception of a change in policy and its effective date

Some schools already have the infrastructure, staffing and logistical know-how in place to meet a formal legal requirement to provide enrichment. However, many other schools lack enrichment programmes and would need time to build one, or would need to scale up existing programmes.

Among other things, they would need to assess local options; build partnerships and commission appropriate providers; verify contractors' safeguarding policies and practices, and conduct basic quality checks; plan logistical changes on-site; repurpose timetables; communicate new programmes to pupils and parents; and make any necessary staffing changes. Local providers would also need time to scale up to meet new demand.

To give the above actors sufficient time to adapt, there should be a lead time of at least one full academic year before the obligations take full effect.





Part 1:  
**Why we must act**

# 1. Our most disadvantaged pupils face a barrage of adversity, made worse by the pandemic

## Children are disengaging from school at frightening pace

- The rate of absence in England's schools is concerningly high; for instance, during the autumn 2020 term, 93,514 pupils were severely absent (i.e. they were missing 50 per cent or more of their possible sessions), compared to 60,244 the autumn before; this means the rate of severe school absence has risen by 54.7 per cent year-on-year.<sup>2</sup>
- Persistent absenteeism is a well-known risk factor for permanent exclusion.<sup>3</sup> For example, the Timpson Review into School Exclusion found every extra percentage point of school sessions missed due to unauthorised absence was associated with a one percentage point increase in the likelihood of permanent exclusion<sup>4</sup>. And we know the outcomes for excluded pupils are often dire: for example, only 4 per cent of pupils in alternative provision who sit their English and maths GCSEs get basic passes in these subjects, and almost one in two children educated in alternative provision is not in education, employment or training after leaving.<sup>5</sup>

## The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is alarmingly high

- Prior to Covid-19, there was already an 18.4-month attainment gap (difference in average GCSE grades between disadvantaged learners and their non-disadvantaged peers).<sup>6</sup>
- This is very likely to increase in the near future. For example, according to one recent study, the Year 2 disadvantage gap in reading and maths was seven months' progress.<sup>7</sup>
- Pupils in secondary schools with the poorest intakes have experienced a greater loss of learning than their peers. For example, it is estimated that pupils in more disadvantaged secondary schools fell 2.2 months behind in reading.<sup>8</sup>
- In its initial assessment of the potential impact of school closures on the attainment gap, the Education Endowment Foundation found that closures were likely to reverse progress made in closing the gap since 2011.<sup>9</sup>

## An already serious mental health problem is now spiralling out of control

- According to the NHS, the rate of probable mental disorders among children aged 5-16 has risen from 1 in 9 in 2017 to 1 in 6 in July 2020.<sup>10</sup>
- The Centre for Mental Health estimates that a further 1.5 million children under 18 will need new or additional mental health support as a consequence of the pandemic.<sup>11</sup>
- Nearly 2.2 million children in England live in households affected by any of the so-called 'toxic trio' of family issues: domestic abuse, parental drug and/or alcohol dependency, and severe parental mental health issues.<sup>12</sup>

2 CSJ analysis of DfE absence data [available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-autumn-term#dataBlock-bef435db-6ac3-4761-ed56-08d919136455-tables>]

3 Social Finance, 2020. "Maximising access to education: who's at risk of exclusion?" [available at: [www.socialfinance.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/whos\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_exclusion.pdf](http://www.socialfinance.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/whos_at_risk_of_exclusion.pdf)]

4 Timpson review of school exclusion, 2019 [available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/807862/Timpson\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807862/Timpson_review.pdf)]

5 CSJ, 2020. 'Warming the cold spots of alternative provision' [Accessed via: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library>]

6 Education Policy Institute, 2020. 'Education in England: annual report' [available at: [https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/EPI\\_2020\\_Annual\\_Report\\_.pdf](https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/EPI_2020_Annual_Report_.pdf)]

7 National Foundation for Education Research, 2021. 'Impact of school closures and subsequent support strategies on attainment and socio-emotional wellbeing in Key Stage 1: Interim Paper 1' [available at: [https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid19\\_Resources/Impact\\_of\\_school\\_closures\\_KS1\\_interim\\_findings\\_paper\\_-\\_Jan\\_2021.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid19_Resources/Impact_of_school_closures_KS1_interim_findings_paper_-_Jan_2021.pdf)]

8 Department for Education, 2021. "Understanding progress in the 2020/21 academic year: Interim findings" Renaissance Learning, Education Policy Institute [available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/962330/Learning\\_Loss\\_Report\\_1A\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962330/Learning_Loss_Report_1A_-_FINAL.pdf)]

9 Education Endowment Foundation, 2020. Best evidence on impact of school closures on the attainment gap [available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/best-evidence-on-impact-of-school-closures-on-the-attainment-gap/>]

10 NHS, 2020. 'Survey conducted in July 2020 shows one in six children have a probable mental health disorder' [available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/news-and-events/news/survey-conducted-in-july-2020-shows-one-in-six-children-having-a-probable-mental-disorder>]

11 Evening Standard, 2021 <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/children-s-mental-health-coronavirus-special-investigation-lockdown-b899917.html>

12 Children's Commissioner (2020), 'Childhood in the time of Covid' [Accessed via: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/cco-childhood-in-the-time-of-covid.pdf>]

## Our children are facing an obesity crisis, particularly in disadvantaged areas

- According to researchers at UCL, one in five young people is obese at age 17.<sup>13</sup> And one in three primary school age children is overweight or obese,<sup>14</sup> which means plenty more younger children are on the same trajectory.
- Children in Year 6 living in the most deprived areas are almost twice as likely to be obese than those living in the least deprived areas.<sup>15</sup>
- The NHS spends £6 billion a year on obesity-related illnesses,<sup>16</sup> and physical inactivity among today's young people will cost £53.3 billion during their lifetimes.<sup>17</sup>
- According to recent YouGov polling, 69 per cent of parents said their children have become less active during the pandemic. 79 per cent said their children were doing less than 60 minutes of activity a day, the government's recommended amount.<sup>18</sup>

## Youth crime is ripping through our communities

- Prior to Covid, 27,000 children self-identified as gang members and a further 313,000 knew someone in a gang.<sup>19</sup>
- With schools closed and young people struggling with their mental health, loneliness and isolation, the pandemic has exposed more young people to gang exploitation.<sup>20</sup>
- In some areas, gangs are using lockdown as a recruitment drive, putting an additional 700,000 more young people in potentially unsafe situations.<sup>21</sup>

## Too many pupils do not have the soft skills required for success in adulthood

- For instance, the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) Education and Skills survey in 2019 found that 44 per cent of employers believed young people leaving school, college or university were not work ready. This is despite 45 per cent of respondents ranking work readiness as the most important factor they consider when recruiting. One of the three key pillars of 'work readiness', identified by the CBI, is 'character' - which includes the mind-set and values that shape a young person's behaviour and decisions, and how they interact and work alongside others.<sup>22</sup>
- According to the DfE's Employer Skill's Survey in 2019, 72 per cent of skills gaps were at least partially caused by inadequate self-management skills, including managing one's own time and task prioritisation, team working, and managing own feelings/handling those of others.<sup>23</sup>
- From the perspective of students, a CBI survey from 2019 showed that half of young people between the ages of 17 and 23 did not feel prepared for the world of work.<sup>24</sup>

13 UCL, 2020. Poorer teens at substantially greater risk of obesity [Accessed via: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ie/news/2020/dec/poorer-teens-substantially-greater-risk-obesity>]

14 NHS, 2020, 'Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity and Diet, England, 2020: Part 3' [Accessed via: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-obesity-physical-activity-and-diet/england-2020/part-3-adult-obesity-copy>]

15 NHS, 2020. 'Statistics on Obesity, Physical Activity and Diet, England, 2020: Part 3' [Accessed via: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-obesity-physical-activity-and-diet/england-2020/part-3-adult-obesity-copy>]

16 Centre for Social Justice, December 2017. 'Off the scales: Tackling England's childhood obesity crisis' [Accessed via: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CSJ-Off-The-Scales-Obesity-Report.pdf>]

17 Street Games & Centre for Economics and Business Research, April 2014. 'The inactivity time bomb: The economic cost of physical inactivity in young people' [Accessed via: <https://network.streetgames.org/sites/default/files/The-Inactivity-TimeBomb-StreetGames-Cebr-report-April-2014.pdf>]

18 Youth Sport Trust, 2021. 'Majority of parents say their children are less active than before lockdown' [Accessed via: <https://www.youthsporttrust.org/news-insight/news/majority-of-parents-say-their-children-are-less-active-than-before-lockdown>]

19 Children's Commissioner (2019), Keeping Kids Safe [Accessed via: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CCO-Gangs.pdf>]

20 Telegraph (9 January 2021), 'School truancy rates in autumn almost doubled amid warnings of 'exponential' growth in county lines' [Accessed via: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/01/09/school-absences-near-double-amid-warnings-county-lines-gangs/>]

21 National Youth Agency (2020), 'Hidden in plain sight' [Accessed via: <https://nya.org.uk/2020/06/hidden-in-plain-sight/>]

22 CBI, 2019, Getting young people 'work ready' [Accessed via: [https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2960/cbi\\_work-readiness.pdf](https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2960/cbi_work-readiness.pdf)]

23 DfE, 2020, Employer Skills Survey 2019: skills needs research report, November 2020 [Accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/936489/ESS\\_2019\\_Skills\\_Needs\\_Report\\_Nov20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936489/ESS_2019_Skills_Needs_Report_Nov20.pdf)] pg 54

24 CBI, 2018, Half of young people do not feel prepared for world of work - CBI/Accenture/Hays survey [Accessed via: <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/articles/half-of-young-people-do-not-feel-prepared-for-world-of-work-cbi-accenture-hays-survey/>]



## 2. Better access to extra-curricular activity would temper these challenges and support a more rounded education

### Pupils would engage more fully in their education

- A study of more than 60,000 students and 4,000 teachers found that active pupils are happier (70 per cent versus 50 per cent) and more confident (76 per cent versus 38 per cent) than their inactive peers.<sup>25</sup> Sports participation also builds prosocial behaviour: 59 per cent of young people agreed that sports helps them make friends.<sup>26</sup>
- As the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights, extended school time is often linked to a range of benefits for low-income students, which include increased attendance at school, improved behaviour, and better relationships with peers.<sup>27</sup>
- Nine in ten teachers think that being active improves pupils' behaviour and school work.<sup>28</sup>
- There is a strong link between disengagement with learning and propensity to be excluded from school. By improving pupil engagement, we would help temper the risk of school exclusion.<sup>29</sup>

### Pupils would boost their academic progress

- According to the EEF: "The evidence indicates that, on average, pupils make two additional months' progress per year from extended school time and in particular through the targeted use of before and after school programmes. There is some evidence that disadvantaged pupils benefit more, making closer to three months' additional progress."<sup>30</sup>
- The EEF also notes that, in addition to providing academic support, some schools have used extended days to provide "stimulating environments and activities or develop additional personal and social skills". It found that such activities were more likely than activities focusing solely on academic study to have an impact on attainment.<sup>31</sup>
- According to a study commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, underachieving young people who participated in extra-curricular activities linked to sport improved their numeracy skills, on average, by 29 per cent above those who did not participate in sport.<sup>32</sup> The findings were based on "six 'high' quality studies conducted in the United Kingdom and North America. Study populations included young people within the range of 4-16 years old."<sup>33</sup>

### Children would improve their mental health

- Regular participation in sports during childhood is associated with lower levels of mental illness later in life.<sup>34</sup> For adults who experienced adverse childhood experiences, participating in team sports during adolescence is linked with lower propensity to develop depression and anxiety.<sup>35</sup>

25 Sport England, October 2020. 'Physical activity can help children catch up on missed work' [Accessed via: <https://www.sportengland.org/news/physical-activity-can-help-children-catch-missed-work>]

26 Ibid

27 Education Endowment Foundation. 'Extended school time' [Accessed via: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/extended-school-time/>]

28 Sport England, October 2020. 'Physical activity can help children catch up on missed work' [Accessed via: <https://www.sportengland.org/news/physical-activity-can-help-children-catch-missed-work>]

29 DfE, 2018. 'Alternative provision market analysis'. [Accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/752548/Alternative\\_Provision\\_Market\\_Analysis.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752548/Alternative_Provision_Market_Analysis.pdf)]

30 Education Endowment Foundation. 'Extended school time' [Accessed via: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/extended-school-time/>]

31 Ibid.

32 DCMS, 2010. 'The Culture and Sport Evidence Programme (CASE), Understanding the drivers, impact and value of engagement in culture and sport, London [Accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/71231/CASE-supersummaryFINAL-19-July2010.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/71231/CASE-supersummaryFINAL-19-July2010.pdf)]

33 Ibid

34 Karen Hughest et al, Bangor University and Public Health Wales, 2018. Sources of resilience and their moderating relationships with harms from adverse childhood experiences [Accessed via: [https://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/ACE%20&%20Resilience%20Report%20\(Eng\\_final2\).pdf](https://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/ACE%20&%20Resilience%20Report%20(Eng_final2).pdf)]

35 Molly C Easterlin et al, 2019. Association of Team Sports Participation With Long-term Mental Health Outcomes Among Individuals Exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences [Accessed via: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31135890/>]



- Physical activity can reduce symptoms of depression and increase resilience to stress.<sup>36</sup> An additional hour of light activity per day between the ages of 12 and 16 is associated with an 8-11 per cent decrease in their depression levels.<sup>37</sup>
- Excessive screen time is associated with poorer mental health in young people.<sup>38</sup> According to research by the University of British Columbia, young people who participate in extracurricular activities are significantly less likely to engage in 2+ hours of recreational screen time after school than those who do not, and the former are more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction and optimism.<sup>39</sup>

## Obesity would drop and pupils would improve their physical health

- Teenagers who play in at least three sports teams are 27 per cent less likely to be overweight, and 39 per cent less likely to be obese, than those who do not participate in any sports teams.<sup>40</sup>
- At ages 14 and 19, participation in team sport is associated with higher fitness levels than simply taking part in informal physical activity.<sup>41</sup>
- Physically active adolescents benefit from improved cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, as well as better bone and heart health.<sup>42</sup> Sport is an excellent way for pupils to remain physically active, but other activities would also support this; for instance, according to research by Ofsted, dance has been used to engage pupils who were not interested in sport.<sup>43</sup>

## Children would be safer

- The most dangerous time for under-16s is after school, between 4 and 6pm, when they are most likely to be a victim of knife crime, according to a study by the Royal London hospital published in the British Medical Journal.<sup>44</sup> This is when approximately half of under-16 stabbings occur, and when 22 per cent of all victims are attacked. The introduction of a broad mix of on-site and off-site enrichment activities would occupy pupils, and create a dispersal effect, during this window.
- Sports programmes have successfully moved young people away from criminal behaviour. For example, the Saracens Rugby Club's Sport's Foundation programme, *Get Onside*, reduced reoffending rates for participants at HMP Feltham Young Offenders Institute to just 15 per cent, compared to the national average of 40 per cent.<sup>45</sup>
- Extra-curricular activity more generally appears to reduce the risk of being drawn into criminal behaviour in the first place. For instance, according to a longitudinal study of pupils from childhood to the end of high school in the US, participation in a range of extracurricular activities was associated with reduced rates of criminal arrest among high-risk boys and girls.<sup>46</sup>

- 36 Aaron Kandola et al, December 2019. Physical activity and depression: Towards understanding the antidepressant mechanisms of physical activity [Accessed via: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0149763419305640?via%3Dihub>]
- 37 The Lancet, 2020. 'Depressive symptoms and objectively measured physical activity and sedentary behaviour throughout adolescence: a prospective cohort study' [available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2215036620300341>]
- 38 Eva Oberle et al, 2020. Screen time and extracurricular activities as risk and protective factors for mental health in adolescence: A population-level study [Accessed via: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0091743520303157?dgcid=author>]
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Keith M Drake et al, Pediatrics, 2012. Influence of sports, physical education, and active commuting to school on adolescent weight status [Accessed via: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22802608/>]
- 41 Pai Lagestad, 2017. The Importance of Adolescents' Participation in Organized Sport According to VO2peak: A Longitudinal Study [Accessed via: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02701367.2018.1448050>]
- 42 WHO, 2019. New WHO-led study says majority of adolescents worldwide are not sufficiently physically active, putting their current and future health at risk [Accessed via: [www.who.int/news/item/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk](http://www.who.int/news/item/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk)]
- 43 Ofsted, 2018. 'Obesity, healthy eating and physical activity in primary schools' [Accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/726114/Obesity\\_healthy\\_eating\\_and\\_physical\\_activity\\_in\\_primary\\_schools\\_170718.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/726114/Obesity_healthy_eating_and_physical_activity_in_primary_schools_170718.pdf)]
- 44 The British Medical Journal, November 2018. 'Under 16s are at highest risk of being stabbed going home from school, UK study finds' [Accessed via: [www.bmj.com/content/363/bmj.k4721](http://www.bmj.com/content/363/bmj.k4721)]
- 45 House of Commons and DCMS, May 2019. Changing lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport' [Accessed via: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/734/734.pdf>]
- 46 Mahoney, 2000. 'School Extracurricular Activity Participation as a Moderator in the Development of Antisocial Patterns', Child Development, 71, 2, 502-516 [Accessed via: <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2000-15476-018>]

## Children would build soft skills required to succeed in life if they engaged in good quality enrichment activities

- According to NFER, YouGov and Ipsos MORI surveys (all conducted in 2017), 97 per cent of teachers, 94 per cent of employers and 88 per cent of young people agree that life skills (self-control, confidence, communication, motivation and resilience) are as important, or even more important than, academic qualifications to young pupils' success.<sup>47</sup>
- An analysis of the Millennium Cohort Study in 2016 showed that after-school clubs, sports and physical activities were positively associated with social, emotional and behavioural outcomes at age 11, even after controlling for prior attainment.<sup>48</sup>
- Research from 2010 highlights that extra-curricular activities can play a key role in building non-cognitive skills, including resilience, self-efficacy, and other emotional and social skills.<sup>49</sup>
- This evidence is supported by the perceptions from a wide cross-section of society. For instance, in focus groups organised by the Social Mobility Commission in 2019, extra-curricular activities were perceived by young people to improve their social skills and extend their friendship networks.

## 3. We have tried extending the school day before, with highly promising results

### Overview of the programme

- Between 2003 and 2010, 'extended services in schools' were rolled out across the country. Participating schools extended their school days to offer pupils and parents a 'core offer' of services, one of which was:  
"A varied menu of activities (including study support, play/recreation, sport, music, arts and craft and other special interest clubs, volunteering and business and enterprise activities)" (defined as "Pupil Activities" from here on)  
Schools offering the full suite of 'core services' added one or more of the following: childcare; parenting support; better access to specialist services such as speech/language therapy; or shared facilities with the community, for example to support adult learning.
- The last recorded formal assessment of the programme took place in 2009/2010. Evaluators surveyed 1,500 participant schools, and supplemented this with school visits and qualitative case studies. They also surveyed parents and pupils. Evaluators were due to carry out further work, but the data they had collected by 2010 still provides rich insights across a formidable sample of schools.<sup>50</sup>

### Impact

- In most cases, respondents were asked to report the benefits that flowed from the full core package of extended services. Schools varied substantially in the number of services they offered, which makes it hard to attribute gains specifically to one particular stream of activity. Nonetheless, we know that 97 per cent of the 1,500 schools offered Pupil Activities (as defined above) as part of their core offer.

47 See: Sutton Trust, 2017. 'Life Lessons' [accessed via: [https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report_FINAL.pdf)]

48 Chanfreau et al (2016) Out of School Activities during Primary School and KS2 attainment. London: UCL Institute of Education

49 Cunha, F., Heckman, J. J., & Schennach, S. M. (2010). Estimating the technology of cognitive and noncognitive skill formation. *Econometrica*, Vol 78 (No 3), 883-931.

50 DfE, 2010, July 2010. 'Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report' [Accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]

Table 1: school perceptions of the benefits of the “extended services in schools” programme, England, 2009

Proportion of schools reporting the following improvements	
Greater pupil enjoyment of school	82 per cent
Greater pupil engagement in learning	74 per cent
Helped them engage disadvantaged families	71 per cent
Greater parental engagement in children’s learning	71 per cent
Had at least some influence in raising attainment	69 per cent
Better links between schools and their communities	68 per cent
Improved teacher/pupil relationships	61 per cent
Reduced behaviour or discipline problems	54 per cent
Improved attendance	45 per cent
Reduced number of exclusions	31 per cent

Source: DfE

### Filling a gap in local demand

- 33 per cent of parents were dissatisfied with the availability of outside-school clubs and activities in their local areas - a substantial shortfall that could be met with better access to extra-curricular activities.
- Where parents were dissatisfied with clubs and activities for children in their local areas, they were asked where any new services should be provided. 60 per cent said they would want to see these provided at or near their child’s school.
- Just 29 per cent of pupils thought that the outside-school activities available to them in their local areas were good enough, and rates were lower for pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Again, this shortage could be addressed by offering pupils new activities before or after school.

## 4. Recent initiatives to boost enrichment in disadvantaged areas have also worked well

In 2020, the DfE published an evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme – a £21.75 million project which ran between 2018-2019 in the DfE’s 12 Opportunity Areas, and aimed to improve access to extra-curricular activities (including sports, arts, debating and information technology) for pupils aged 5-18 in disadvantaged areas<sup>51</sup>. According to the evaluation:

- confidence, resilience, team working/building relationships and social and emotional skills were the most common outcomes experienced by young people;
- the regular structure of ELS provision encouraged young people to be more organised and committed – skills that families reported were lacking before; and
- schools reported positive changes in pupil behaviour, attendance and aspirations that they believed would be sustained.

51 DfE, 2020. ‘Process evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme’ [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942557/ELS\\_Process\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942557/ELS_Process_Evaluation.pdf)]



Part 2:

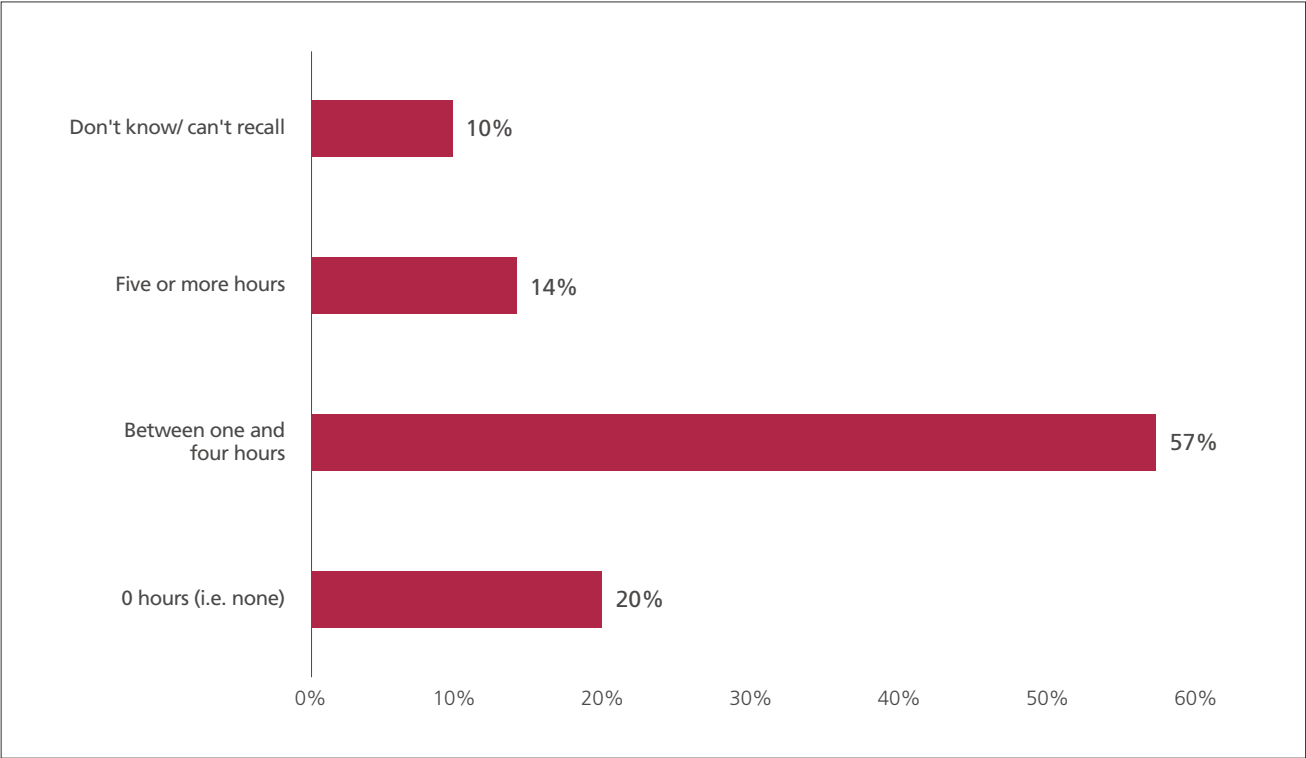
Current enrichment take up  
and parental support for  
more enrichment at school



# 1. New Polling shows that one in five primary and secondary pupils (and one in four disadvantaged pupils) do no enrichment activities in an average week

- The CSJ commissioned YouGov in June 2021 to survey parents of pupils in primary and secondary schools in England. The first question related to the number of hours of enrichment activities each pupil does in an average week.
- In the survey, the CSJ defined ‘enrichment activities’ as ‘a wide variety of structured activities and clubs, such as: sports, music, art, drama, dance, outdoor/adventure, debating, volunteering, business/enterprise, tech/digital, and cooking.’
- According to the results of the CSJ-YouGov polling exercise (shown in Figure 1), one in five (19.6 per cent) parents in England report that their primary or secondary school children do no enrichment activities in an average week.<sup>52</sup>
- A majority (57 per cent) of parents report their child does between one and four hours of enrichment activities in an average week.

Figure 1: Frequency of participation in enrichment activities in an average week, England, 2021 (Base = 932)



Source: CSJ/YouGov

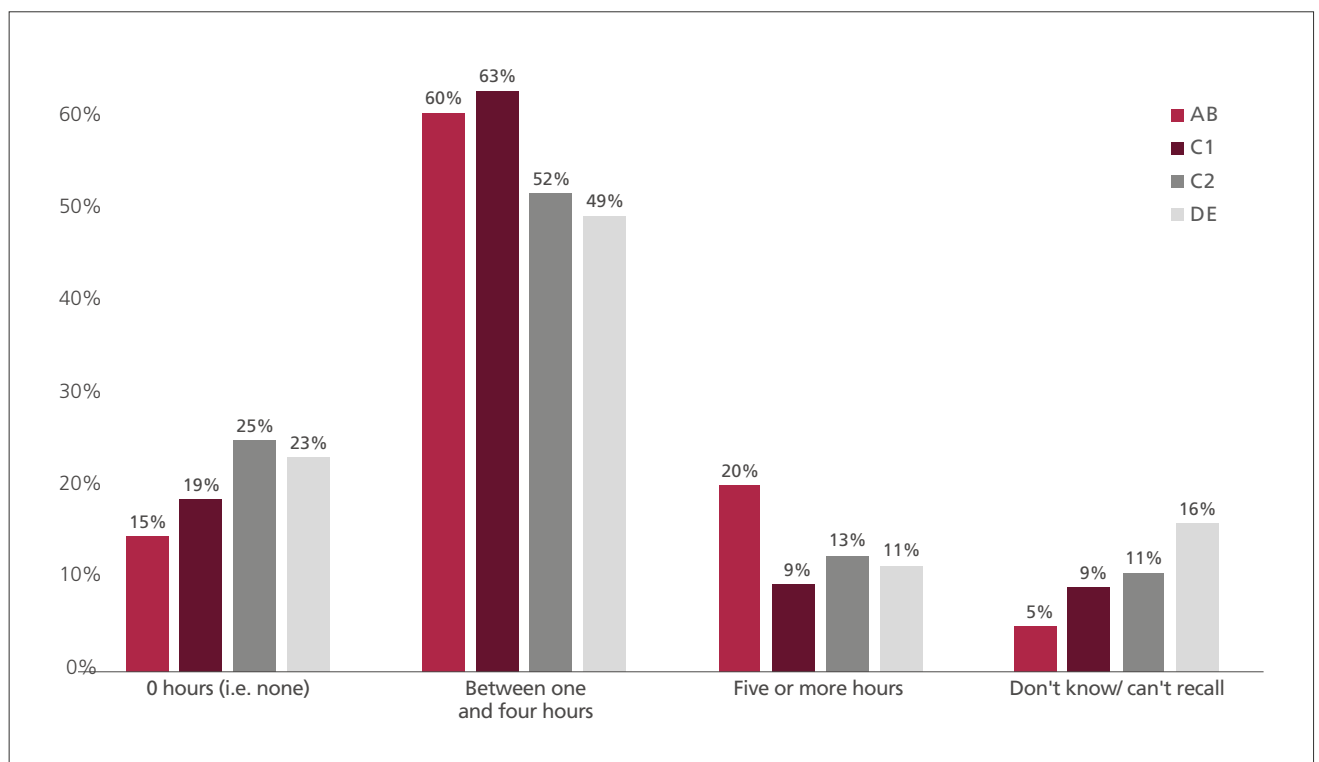
- The polling also showed there was no significant difference in time spent on enrichment activities between primary and secondary stages of education. According to the analysis, 22 per cent of parents with a secondary pupil and 18 per cent of parents with a primary pupil report that their child spends no time doing enrichment activities in the average week.

52 All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 8535 adults, of which 1638 were Parents in England with children aged 18 and under. Fieldwork was undertaken between 22nd - 28th June 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

## Our most disadvantaged pupils are the least likely to participate in enrichment activities

- Parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds are significantly more likely than those from higher socio-economic backgrounds to respond that their child does no enrichment activities in an average week. Around a quarter of parents in the social groups C2 (25 per cent) and DE (23 per cent) report that their child does no enrichment activities, compared to just 15 per cent of those in the AB group (Figure 4).<sup>53</sup>
- As Figure 2 highlights, only 61 per cent of parents in the DE social grade report that their child does any enrichment activities in an average week, compared to 81 per cent in the AB social group. This finding is statistically highly significant.<sup>54</sup>
- Parents from the DE social grade are 20 per cent less likely than their peers in the AB social grade to report their child does between one and four hours of enrichment activity in the average week (49 per cent versus 60 per cent). They are also almost half as likely as their more advantaged peers to report their child does five or more hours (11 per cent versus 20 per cent).

**Figure 2: Frequency of participation in enrichment activities in an average week, split by social grade AB/C1/C2/DE, England, 2021 (Base = 322/265/160/185)**



Source: CSJ/YouGov

- The polling also reveals a regional disparity in participation in enrichment activities. Parents of pupils in the Yorkshire and the Humber are almost three times more likely than their peers in London to report that their child does no enrichment activities in an average week (28 per cent versus 10 per cent).
- And parents in the North West are 2.5 times more likely than their peers in London to select this option. Both the findings above are statistically significant at the 1 per cent level.

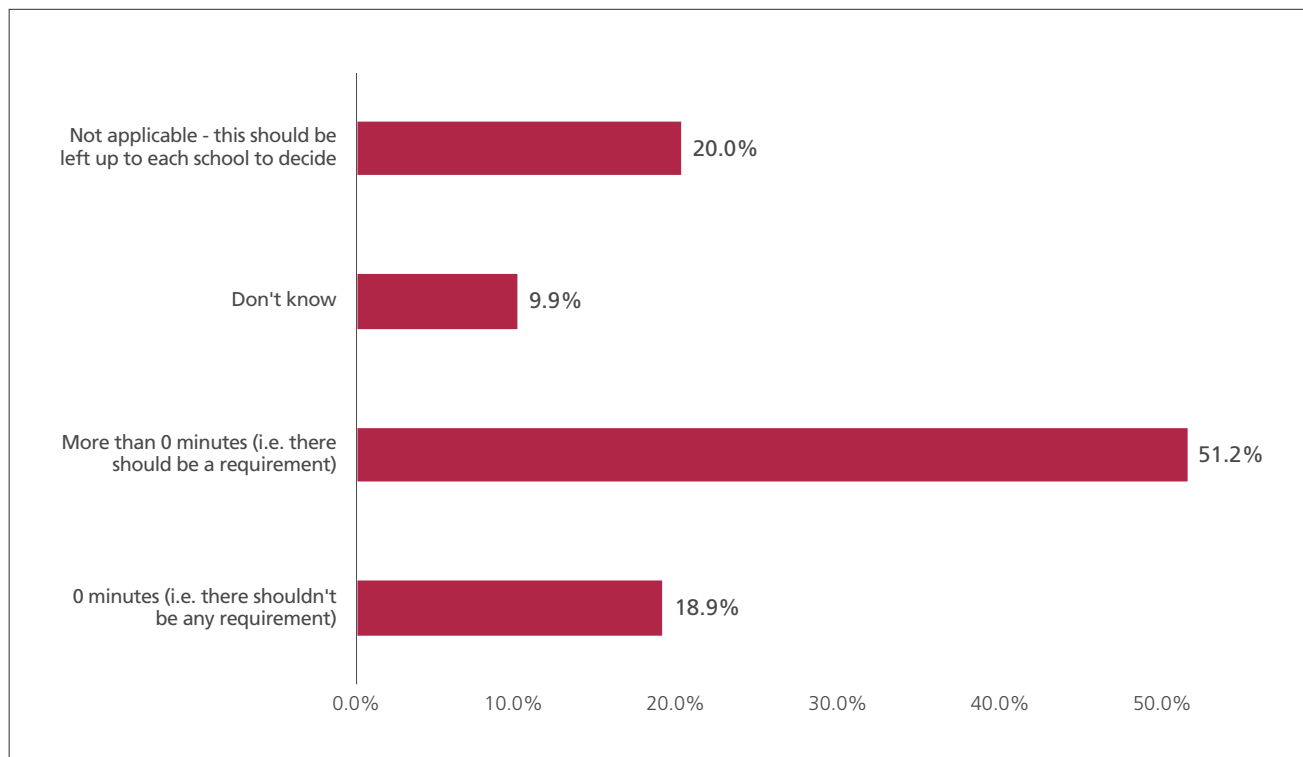
<sup>53</sup> Statistically significant at the 1% and 5% level, respectively.

<sup>54</sup> Statistically significant at the 0.1% level - in other words, statistically highly significant.

## 2. A majority of parents support a requirement for pupils to engage in additional hours of enrichment activities within a longer school day

- According to CSJ/YouGov polling, only 19 per cent of parents reject a requirement, while 51 per cent believe there should be a requirement. And 20 per cent of parents believe this should be left up to each school to decide.

Figure 3: parent support for additional hours of enrichment activities outside of usual school hours, England, 2021 (Base = 932)



Source: CSJ/YouGov

- 40 per cent of parents of pupils who do no enrichment activities support a requirement for children to participate in additional hours of activities. This finding shows there is significant potential for the government to engage with currently inactive pupils and their families.
- There is little difference in the proportion of parents who support the requirement when factoring in social grade or stage of education.
- Parents from the lowest (DE) and highest (AB) socio-economic groups are similarly disposed to support a requirement (49 per cent versus 54 per cent).
- Out of the parents who selected a time requirement for enrichment activities they would support within an extended school day scenario, a majority (58 per cent) support a time requirement of up to 60 minutes. This finding was consistent across parents of pupils in both primary and secondary school, and across different social grades.



Part 3:

## Proposed delivery model



# 1. The obligation for school pupils

## Mandatory requirement

- All pupils would be required to do at least 5 hours of extra-curricular enrichment every school week (excluding weekends). This figure complements the CSJ/YouGov polling outlined in this paper, according to which the majority of parents who wanted a requirement for enrichment activity within a longer school day said that up to 60 minutes of daily enrichment activity was the right amount. (As we set out in Section 6 below, there would need to be a lag-time between the inception of a change in policy and its effective date.)
- However, many parents already pay for pupils to do extra-curricular activities on school days. Forcing them to take up school-funded activities instead would undermine choice, and a substantial amount of deadweight would flow from replacing privately funded activities with state-funded ones. To avoid both of these outcomes, pupils who already engage in extra-curricular activities on school days would be able to offset the relevant hours against the core requirement. Schools would be expected to verify that claims were bona fide.
- Pupils should be granted special dispensation in certain circumstances - for instance, where pupils have responsibilities as carers, or where a health condition precludes them from taking part.

## Rationale for a mandatory approach

- There is evidence to suggest that a non-mandatory model would risk tempering engagement for disadvantaged pupils, the latter of whom are less likely to engage with optional enrichment programmes than their peers. According to CSJ/YouGov polling, parents of pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds (DE social group) were substantially more likely than those from less disadvantaged backgrounds to report their child did no enrichment activities in an average week (23 per cent versus 15 per cent). And according to the last official evaluation of the (non-mandatory) 'extended services in schools' programme outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper, pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) took up, on average, fewer hours of activities per week than their peers.<sup>55</sup> In addition, schools with higher levels of FSM pupils were more likely than those with lower levels to agree with the statement "this school struggles to engage disadvantaged pupils and families in extended services activities". There is a substantial risk, therefore, that non-mandatory enrichment would be utilised least by the pupils who need it most; perversely, this would further accentuate the learning and development gap that already exists between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.
- The relative predictability of a mandatory requirement would make it easier for schools to model and plan their programmes, and to make good investment decisions. Conversely, the take-up of activities in a non-mandatory model would be less calculable, which would heighten the risk of undersupply or oversupply; the former would undermine the point of offering extra enrichment, while the latter would waste resources.
- As the evaluation of the 'extended services in schools' programme shows, it is not always easy to communicate non-mandatory offers to parents, which in turn dampens their awareness of what is available. Only 17 per cent of parents said they knew "a great deal" about the types of additional services offered by their child's school, whereas 34 per cent of parents felt they only knew a little about the services on offer, and nine per cent knew nothing at all about them.<sup>56</sup> Conversely a mandatory requirement would make enrichment an integral part of the everyday structure and ethos of schooling.
- A non-mandatory offer could relegate the perceived importance of enrichment in pupils' and parents' eyes. Rather than soft signal enrichment as a "nice-to-have", we should be extolling its fundamental role at the core of a rounded education. As we have outlined in this paper, better access to extra-curricular activities would temper many of the challenges faced by disadvantaged pupils.

<sup>55</sup> DfE, 2010. 'Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report' [accessed via: [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

## 2. The obligation for schools

Schools would be expected to meet the demand that flowed from the mandatory requirement for pupils outlined in Section 1 above (5 hours of school-commissioned activity a school week (excluding weekends) minus private arrangements on school days)

- Government would change the law so that schools would have a legal duty to meet the demand that flowed from this new mandatory requirement.
- Schools would then claim back the commensurate value of this activity from DfE, up to a maximum ceiling (the latter of which would be determined by a formula). This could be done in various ways - for instance, an initial stock payment to all schools + top-up or bill back where necessary; a real-time repayment mechanism; or a termly bill-back arrangement).

### Reporting and quality assurance

- While schools would need to check attendance, it would be highly challenging for them to calculate robust impact data - not least, given the likely prominence of locally-commissioned providers in our proposed model. In particular, it would be very difficult for schools to track the impact of their programmes on non-cognitive skills - which requires a somewhat complicated form of evaluation. And it is often hard to disentangle the relative impact of overlapping programmes. As we outline in Part 3, Section 4 of this paper, an approved provider list would present us with an exciting opportunity to do the above in other, more workable contexts.
- It would, however, be highly prudent to introduce a measure of accountability and quality assurance - particularly given the scale of our proposal. In 2019, Ofsted included 'personal development' as part of its inspection framework. Accordingly, schools are now expected to give pupils the chance to develop and discover their interests and talents. The new framework also places an emphasis on character (for example, resilience, confidence and independence) and schools are expected to help pupils "know how to keep physically and mentally healthy."<sup>57</sup> In its latest annual report, Ofsted said that one of the notable features of schools that had not improved was that "pupils did not take up extra-curricular activities,"<sup>58</sup> which suggests that, to some degree, Ofsted's new emphasis on the above elements is starting to manifest itself in inspection results. We welcome these improvements, but believe the framework could be further strengthened to emphasise enrichment.
- Ofsted inspectors should scrutinise elements of the new enrichment requirement we propose in this paper, to the extent that they are within Ofsted's field of expertise - so for instance, inspectors should evaluate the structure of enrichment programmes (including leadership and management), and levels of pupil engagement and their perceptions of the programmes.

## 3. Avoiding the pitfalls of absence by building a rich offer

- While the mandatory nature of an extended enrichment programme would secure many pupils' participation, this would not be true for all pupils. The rate of persistent absence in England's schools is already concerningly high: for instance, during the autumn 2020 term, 93,514 pupils were severely absent (i.e. they were missing 50 per cent or more of their possible sessions), compared to 60,244 the autumn before - this means the rate of severe school absence has risen by 54.7 per cent year-on-year;<sup>59</sup> in some cases, this general disengagement would simply seep into the new enrichment requirement.

57 Ofsted, 2021. 'Guidance: education inspection framework' [accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework>]

58 Ofsted, 2020. 'The annual report of her majesty's chief inspector of education, children's services and skills 2019/2020' [accessed via: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-annual-report-201920-education-childrens-services-and-skills/the-annual-report-of-her-majestys-chief-inspector-of-education-childrens-services-and-skills-201920](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-annual-report-201920-education-childrens-services-and-skills/the-annual-report-of-her-majestys-chief-inspector-of-education-childrens-services-and-skills-201920)]

59 CSJ analysis of DfE absence data [available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-autumn-term#dataBlock-bef435db-6ac3-4761-ed56-08d919136455-tables>]

- In any case, participating pupils would only derive the full benefit of enrichment if the suite of activities on offer was sufficiently broad to be engaging (according to one study, for instance, while 45 per cent of teachers said their school offered debating, only 2 per cent of young people participated).<sup>60</sup> And even pupils who do not have a track-record of absence may lose interest in a narrow offer: one school we spoke to abandoned its entire mandatory enrichment programme because its offer was not broad enough to engage its pupils (and that was just one Wednesday a week for one hour).
- It is, therefore, crucial that schools are given adequate resources to build rich, varied programmes that maximise pupil and parental buy-in - and that they consult parents and pupils extensively when deciding what particular blend of activities they offer. There is evidence that a strong commitment to these principles would improve engagement. For example, in 2020, the DfE published an evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme - a £21.75 million project which ran between 2018-2019 in the DfE's 12 Opportunity Areas, and aimed to improve access to extra-curricular activities (including sports, arts, debating and information technology) for disadvantaged pupils aged 5-18.<sup>61</sup> According to the evaluation, the following factors were associated with stronger engagement and attendance: proactive and effective communication with pupils and parents; offering a wide range of activities; tailoring activities to pupils' needs; and supporting ancillary costs (such as transport). Most saliently, disadvantaged pupils were on average "as likely as their non-disadvantaged peers to participate in most activities" and engagement was "often higher" than their peers.
- It is also vital that schools accurately communicate to parents what is being proposed. According to a recent IPSOS Mori poll (which asked parents what would best support pupils to recover lost education as a result of the pandemic), only 21 per cent of parents supported a "longer school day for all students" while the strongest support (68 per cent) was for "increased wellbeing support for all students".<sup>62</sup> A "longer school day for all students" could very easily be interpreted as an extension of teacher instruction - whereas the model we propose would be predicated on enrichment, and would very much chime with the "increased wellbeing" cited most commonly by parents in this survey. It is also worth noting that our proposal is not restricted to catch-up: while it would clearly support catch-up, it would represent a permanent structural change in our education system, aimed at addressing longstanding issues of educational disadvantage.

## 4. Growing the supply-side and identifying suitable providers

### Community, voluntary and other organisations would need to scale up to meet new demand

- The community/voluntary-driven sector has been trampled by the pandemic. For instance:
  - Pro Bono Economics estimates that the funding gap between expenditure and income over the pandemic could reach £10bn, which would lead to 60,000 redundancies;<sup>63</sup> and
  - according to a recent survey of almost 600 youth charities, 64 per cent of these organisations are at risk of closure within 12 months, and 83 per cent have seen their income fall since the pandemic began.<sup>64</sup>
- Even prior to Covid-19, there was a relative dearth of local options in parts of the country. We know, for instance, that there were on average fewer voluntary and community organisations in rural areas than there were in non-rural areas.<sup>65</sup> And according to the last official evaluation of the 'extended services in schools' programme outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper, urban schools were better placed to offer a fuller range of activities than their rural counterparts were: while 71 per cent of urban schools offered the full core offer in that case, just 52 per cent of rural schools were able to do so.<sup>66</sup>

60 Sutton Trust, 2017. 'Life Lessons' [accessed via: [https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report_FINAL.pdf) pg 16]

61 DfE, 2020. 'Process evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942557/ELS\\_Process\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942557/ELS_Process_Evaluation.pdf)]

62 TES, 2021. 'Catch-up: Parents see pupil wellbeing support as more important than extended school days and reduced holidays, Ipsos Mori poll finds' [accessed via: [www.tes.com/news/exclusive-thumbs-down-longer-day-and-shorter-breaks?fbclid=IwAR0IKoT8cclKQk4a-5V4ThsvmuS9MZHQAQOdus29c2EpwipaBA68gRDetPNw](https://www.tes.com/news/exclusive-thumbs-down-longer-day-and-shorter-breaks?fbclid=IwAR0IKoT8cclKQk4a-5V4ThsvmuS9MZHQAQOdus29c2EpwipaBA68gRDetPNw)]

63 Pro Bono Economics, 2020. 'Pro Bono Economics/Civil Society Media results: 02 & 03 June 2020' [Accessed via: <https://www.probonoeconomics.com/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=046ba879-4594-4696-8b9a-1bca85b204e9>]

64 UK Youth, 2021. 'Impact of Covid on UK Youth charity sector' [Accessed via: [https://www.ukyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UK-Youth-Fund-Report\\_1.pdf](https://www.ukyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UK-Youth-Fund-Report_1.pdf)]

65 NCVO, 2020. 'UK Civil Society Almanac 2020: Profile: Where are organisations based?' [accessed via: <https://almanac.fc.production.ncvocloud.net/profile/geography/#rural-versus-urban>]

66 DfE, 2010, 2010. 'Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]

- A secure, substantial funding stream from government to schools to fund new enrichment programmes would galvanise the market. Community sports clubs, youth clubs, education-focused charities, children's activity providers, sports coaches, leisure centre workforce staff, volunteers, and others could innovate and grow to meet new demand. There is so much potential to draw on here - for instance:
  - as the last official evaluation of the 'extended services in schools' programme outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper shows, there is ample scope to build community links: 82 per cent of schools agreed that "there has been increased partnership working with other agencies and providers of community services as a result of extended services provision in this school" (10 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, while just 8 per cent disagreed);
  - according to the same evaluation, 71 per cent of schools agreed that "there has been improved collaboration with neighbouring schools as a result of extended services provision" (13 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed, while only 16 per cent disagreed) - this suggests that schools could also form partnerships with one another, individually, as part of multi-academy trusts, with school sports partnerships, or with independent schools;
  - in the case of MATs, a dedicated team could travel and work across trusts, focusing solely on coordinating and delivering activities;
  - universities could offer their facilities to local schools to help meet their outreach targets - some facilities are already open to members of the public (for example, Imperial College's 25 metre swimming pool in South Kensington, London); and
  - capacity building could extend to school leavers, who could help deliver extra-curricular activities through apprenticeships, for example, either with schools or community/voluntary providers directly.

### Government should appoint a stream of approved providers to help prime the market - this would run alongside the bulk of commissioning, which would take place through schools

- Approved providers would receive direct grant funding from government. They would then market their offers to schools. If a school decided to take up an offer, it would offset the associated cost against its maximum enrichment budget.
- From schools' perspective, an off-the-shelf option could help reduce red tape and therefore reduce their commissioning workload. Schools would have to spend less time searching for providers, negotiating with providers, and undertaking other ancillary arrangements (such as safeguarding checks, making sure providers had the right policies practices in place, and renting equipment and space).
- An approved provider list would also help to prime the provider market more quickly. Providers that have the latent capacity to scale quickly would be able to do this far quicker if they had a more predictable funding stream - and if they spent less time on speculative approach work with schools, which can often be labour-intensive.
- Government should also weigh the terms of its tender to support growth in the most disadvantaged areas where good options are scarcer. Successful applicants would need to demonstrate that they were able to operate in those priority areas, and that they had a reasonable prospect of engaging disadvantaged pupils in particular.
- As part of its contract with approved providers, the DfE could ask them to collect robust data on take-up and impact. In this way, the DfE would be able to quality assure provision, and could make more informed decisions about suitable providers in subsequent funding rounds. The data would also contribute to our ongoing understanding about which enrichment programmes work best, and why. (Conversely, it would be much harder to track and measure the impact of multiple programmes commissioned through thousands of schools, and the latter would in any case impose an onerous weight of bureaucracy on schools.)

### Government should design a digital platform to help schools and providers build partnerships

- A national enrichment programme of the order proposed in this paper would precipitate a large number of transactions. A well-structured digital platform would help schools and providers match demand and supply more seamlessly.



- Our conversations with teachers suggest that commissioning can currently be very ad hoc. Schools and providers might advertise commissioning opportunities and services on their websites, but marrying the two can often depend on chance. Schools that have enrichment officers can be more proactive, but the lack of a local platform means the matching process can be more time-consuming than it needs to be, and that opportunities are missed.
- A digital platform would also allow schools to rate providers and share feedback, therefore introducing better information into the market. Not all schools have enrichment programmes and for those who do not, or whose offer is nascent, this information would allow them to learn quickly about good practice. According to a survey by NFER, only half of schools had a shared approach or policy on building life skills (self-control, confidence, communication, motivation and resilience), and just 13 per cent knew where to get information to support the development of those skills in their pupils.<sup>67</sup>
- The government has already designed a platform in the apprenticeships space that could serve as a useful blueprint for a digital platform. The Digital Apprenticeship Service is a ‘user-centred high-volume transactional service’ and has been lauded for its quality. In 2018, it won the Digital Public Service Innovation of the Year award.<sup>68</sup>
- A digital platform would allow local institutions (for instance, independent schools and universities) to market their outreach programmes and signpost shared facilities.
- And such a platform would give government the chance to learn more about the breadth, mix and quality of available options in different parts of the country - which in turn could inform policy decisions (for instance, which areas to prioritise in subsequent waves of an approved provider list).

## Examples of programmes that successfully engage disadvantaged pupils

### Dallaglio RugbyWorks

- Places coaches in schools for excluded pupils and harnesses the values of rugby to develop a wide range of essential skills. Rugby coaches leads weekly small groups of 8-10.<sup>69</sup>
- The programme has a demonstrable track record in helping children to develop their soft skills, increase their engagement with school, and move onto suitable career paths.<sup>70</sup>

### Football Beyond Borders (FBB)

- Works with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who are passionate about football, but at risk of school exclusion, to help them complete their education and transition successfully into adulthood.<sup>71</sup>
- In 2019, FBB reached 612 students across 37 projects in schools across London, Essex and the North West. 95 per cent of participants completed the academic year and 72 per cent improved their behaviour in school.<sup>72</sup>

### Empire Fighting Chance

- Integrates boxing with mentoring, education, therapy and careers support. Reaches nearly 5,000 young people every year across South West England and Wales. Also shares its model with local organisations to emulate their work.<sup>73</sup>

67 See, for example, Sutton Trust, 2017. ‘Life Lessons’ [accessed via: [https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report_FINAL.pdf)]

68 FE Week, 2018. ‘ESFA apprenticeship service wins digital leaders award’ [accessed via: <https://feweek.co.uk/2018/06/22/esfa-apprenticeship-service-wins-digital-leaders-award/>]

69 Dallaglio RugbyWorks [Accessed via: <https://www.dallaglorugbyworks.com/what-we-do/rugbyworks>]

70 Ibid

71 Football Beyond Borders [Accessed via: <https://www.footballbeyondborders.org/what-we-do/fbb-schools-boys/>]

72 Football Beyond Borders, 2019. ‘Impact report 2018-2019’ [Accessed via: [www.footballbeyondborders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/201819-Impact-Report-1-1.pdf](http://www.footballbeyondborders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/201819-Impact-Report-1-1.pdf)]

73 Empire Fighting Chance, 2020. ‘Impact Report: 2020’ [Accessed at: [www.empirefightingchance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/EFC-5279\\_IMPACT-REPORT-12.20\\_6.pdf](http://www.empirefightingchance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/EFC-5279_IMPACT-REPORT-12.20_6.pdf)]

- Of the young people it supported in 2020:
  - 96 per cent felt more confident and motivated about their careers;
  - 84 per cent developed skills for work;
  - 62 per cent went into employment or further education, or gained a qualification;
  - 68 per cent are no longer committing anti-social or criminal acts; and
  - 64 per cent have improved relationships with their families.<sup>74</sup>

## 5. Resource implications

### Some schools already extend their days, but not all schools have the resources to do this

- At present, the length of a school day in a maintained school is determined by a headteacher and must be approved by the relevant governing body. Academies set the length of their own day and many have made use of their powers to do so; for instance, 39 per cent of academies founded before May 2010 have chosen to extend their school day.<sup>75</sup>
- It is estimated that 70-80 per cent of independent schools have extended their school days, usually offering a wide programme of extra-curricular activities during the extended time.<sup>76</sup> On average, private school pupils engage in three times as much sport per week as do state school pupils.<sup>77</sup>
- Schools with extended days draw on a variety of resources to make this happen - for example, school fees, user charges, state-school funding, local authority support, private sector support, free/subsidised support from charitable organisations, or staff volunteers.
- However, not all schools have the resources to extend their days. According to the 'extended school services' evaluation outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper, the most common barrier to developing and delivering extended services was funding (63 per cent), followed by lack of available facilities or places (23 per cent) and lack of specialist staff (23 per cent).<sup>78</sup>

### New DfE funding/bill-back mechanism

- Under the model we propose in this paper, schools would be expected to meet the demand that flowed from the mandatory requirement for pupils outlined in Part 3, Section 1 above (5 hours of school-commissioned activity a school week (excluding weekends) minus private arrangements on school days).
- Schools would then claim back the commensurate value of this activity from DfE. This could be done in various ways (for instance, an initial stock payment to all schools + top-up/bill back where necessary; a real-time repayment mechanism; or a termly bill-back arrangement).
- Below, we outline some of the key variables that would need to be considered when considering overall quantum.

### Commissioning local providers

- The vast bulk of the work under our proposed model would not fall on teachers' shoulders. Our model would, instead, be community-led: schools would draw heavily on locally-based organisations and would be supported financially to cover appropriate commissioning costs.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> House of Commons Library, July 2019. 'The school day and year' [Accessed via: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn07148/>]

<sup>76</sup> The Telegraph, March 2015. 'Independent schools do 'almost triple amount of sports than state counterparts' [Accessed via: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11490591/Independent-schools-do-almost-triple-amount-of-sports-than-state-counterparts.html>]

<sup>77</sup> Ibid

<sup>78</sup> DfE, 2010. 'Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]

- The reasons why we propose a community-led model are as follows.
  - Our offer is predicated on enrichment, rather than the extension of teacher instruction.
  - Our teachers are already stretched. For instance, the OECD's 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey of 48 countries shows that teachers in England have some of the highest levels of stress in the OECD: 38 per cent of teachers report experiencing stress in their work "a lot" compared to an OECD average of 18 per cent. And 22 per cent of teachers below the age of 51 would like to leave teaching in the next five years, which is higher than the OECD average (14 per cent).<sup>79</sup> In this context, we would not want to add to an already challenging workload.
  - Some schools rent parts of their premises after school hours to generate income. Others are situated in new-build premises and do not always have control over their premises at all hours. These schools would be more reliant on externally sourced options.

## Employing a nominal amount of teacher time

- The core ask for teachers would, in light of the points made above, be minimal.
- However, where activities were offered on-site, a small number of teachers may need to be present for logistical and safeguarding reasons. And if schools decided to offer school-led extra-curricular activities as part of the overall mix, teachers could supervise some of those activities. Either way, teachers would be offered the choice to take up new paid responsibilities and budget would need to be available to cover additional overheads.
- Where schools offered teacher-led activities, they would also need to be able to invest in appropriate equipment.

## Enrichment officer

- Many schools that already offer their pupils an enrichment programme appoint in-house enrichment leads.
- Given the scale and ambition of our proposed initiative, it would be reasonable to expect that all/most schools would elect to make similar appointments and budget should be made available to cover these costs.
- Schools would have full discretion as to whether to make such an appointment, and to determine their day-to-day tasks in each case. However, some of the tasks we foresee enrichment officers undertaking include:
  - designing enrichment programmes and refining them accordingly over time;
  - commissioning, and quality assuring, different providers to offer a rich blend of enrichment;
  - ensuring that all pupils meet the new minimum obligation that flows from our proposed model;
  - liaising with feeder schools and DfE to access absence information, with a view to identifying pupils who may need additional engagement in incoming cohorts;
  - working with successful local organisations, and local primary schools who offer enrichment programmes, to understand more about which enrichment activities are likely to engage incoming cohorts;
  - monitoring and refining enrichment programmes; and
  - designing plans to communicate programmes to parents and pupils, and to maximise their buy-in.

## Transport

- Some schools would need to be supported with transports costs. As the examples, below highlights, schools in rural areas and disadvantaged areas would be strong candidates for receiving additional support.
  - According to the evaluation of the 'extended services in schools' programme outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper, while (overall) 15 per cent of schools identified transport as a barrier to developing extended services, the figure for rural schools was 30 per cent - but just 11 per cent for urban schools.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> OECD, 2018. 'Results from TALIS 2018: England' [accessed via: [https://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS2018\\_CN\\_ENG\\_Vol\\_II\\_extended.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS2018_CN_ENG_Vol_II_extended.pdf)]

<sup>80</sup> DfE, 2010. 'Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]

- The same evaluation also found that, for 61 per cent of urban schools, the activities and childcare offered by schools were within walking distance, but this was only the case for 22 per cent of rural schools (and 47 per cent of schools in town and fringe areas). And logistical issues such as time, location and transport were greater concerns for parents in rural areas (46 per cent) than they were in urban areas (26 per cent).<sup>81</sup>
- According to the evaluators of the Essential Life Skills programme highlighted in Part 3, Section 3 of this paper, supporting disadvantaged families with transportation costs helped overcome barriers to participation and “was welcomed, particularly for families with multiple children and/or in rural areas.”<sup>82</sup>
- The DfE should offer schools in poorly connected parts of the country, and in highly disadvantaged areas, a transport premium so that geography or disadvantage do not scupper access to a broad enrichment programme.

## Apprenticeships/school leavers

- Appropriate revisions should be made to the government’s apprenticeships policy so that schools could employ school leavers as apprentices to lead enrichment programmes.
- The DfE and Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) could, for instance, work with potential providers to develop a new apprenticeship standard for a ‘school enrichment lead’. Existing apprenticeship programmes, such as the School Business Professional standard, could be used as a starting point from which to build such a standard.<sup>83</sup>
- Many schools and Multi-Academy Trusts underuse their levy funds. Incentives could be introduced to encourage them to draw down more of their levy payments to appoint new enrichment leads. For instance, the Government could subsidise the training element of a new apprenticeship standard for enrichment leads for a fixed period of time, to encourage take up of the standard. It could also introduce an employer national insurance exemption for the role (currently only apprentices who earn below £827 per week, and are under the age of 25, are eligible for the exemption).<sup>84</sup>
- A new apprenticeship standard for an enrichment lead would give school leavers the chance to gain employment and training in a labour market that is currently challenging for young people. And apprentices who are drawn from the schools in which they then serve would potentially make them more effective role models - they would be well placed to build pupil engagement and help embed a community-led delivery model.

## Start-up fund

- Schools with higher proportions of disadvantaged pupils are already less likely to offer a range of clubs and societies than their counterparts. For instance, secondary schools with the lowest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM are twice as likely to offer debating clubs as schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM (70 per cent compared to 35 per cent). The disparity between the most and least disadvantaged schools is evident across many types of other activities, including arts/photography, performing arts and volunteering.<sup>85</sup>
- According to the last recorded official evaluation of the ‘extended services in schools’ programme outlined in Part 1, Section 3 of this paper, the most common barrier to developing and delivering extended services was funding (63 per cent), followed by lack of available facilities or places (23 per cent) and lack of specialist staff (23 per cent).<sup>86</sup>

81 Ibid

82 DfE, 2020. ‘Process evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme’ [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942557/ELS\\_Process\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942557/ELS_Process_Evaluation.pdf)]

83 Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, 2021. ‘School business professional’ [accessed via: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/school-business-professional-v1-0>]

84 CSJ, 2020. ‘Trade Secrets: how to reboot apprenticeships and kick-start the recovery’ [accessed via: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CSJJ8393-Apprenticeships-200806-v2-final-web-version.pdf>]

85 Sutton Trust, 2017. ‘Life Lessons’ [accessed via: [https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Life-Lessons-Report_FINAL.pdf)]

86 DfE, 2010, 2010. ‘Extended services evaluation: end of year 1 report’ [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182634/DFE-RR016.pdf)]



- And according to the evaluators of the Essential Life Skills programme highlighted in Part 3, Section 3 above, an eighth of providers in the first wave survey reported that lack of equipment was a barrier to developing a programme of activities.<sup>87</sup>
- There is a risk, therefore, that schools in more advantaged areas will be better placed to make use of the new subsidies on offer, while other schools with less established enrichment programmes lag behind because they lack the know-how and resources to capitalise as effectively. To mitigate this, government should create a start-up fund for schools in the most deprived areas who do not currently have an enrichment programme. Qualifying schools could draw down on this fund to purchase appropriate equipment. For example, schools that participated in the Essential Life Skills programme outlined in Part 3, Section 3 of this paper purchased audio/visual equipment, website subscriptions and educational robotics kits to support their enrichment offers; they also invested in staff training.<sup>88</sup> The evaluation of the programme showed that these upfront investments helped sustain schools' enrichment offers beyond the lifecycle of the programme itself.<sup>89</sup>

## 6. Lag-time between the inception of a change in policy and its effective date

- According to YouGov polling conducted in 2016, 34 per cent of state secondary schools already offered their pupils voluntary longer school days at that time, and four per cent mandated them.<sup>90</sup> Accordingly, some schools will already have the infrastructure, staffing and logistical know-how in place to meet a formal legal requirement to provide enrichment.
- However, many other schools lack enrichment programmes and would need time to build one, or would need to scale up existing programmes. This was borne out in the evaluation of the Essential Life Skills Programme outlined in Part 3, Section 3 of this paper, according to which the relatively short timescale earmarked for initial design and implementation compromised the efficacy of enrichment programmes in some cases.<sup>91</sup>
- Schools would, therefore, need enough time to meet the demands of a mandatory requirement. Among other things, they would need to assess local options; build partnerships and commission appropriate providers; verify contractors' safeguarding policies and practices; plan logistical changes on-site; repurpose timetables; and make necessary staffing changes (including potentially appointing enrichment officers). And they would need time to communicate new programmes to pupils and parents, and to secure their buy-in.
- As we have outlined in Section 4, local providers would also need to scale up to meet new demand - building capacity is an iterative process as schools gradually build up their capacity to host and offer activities, and as external options are brokered over time. If the DfE developed an approved provider list as per our proposal in this paper, it would also need time to enlist approved providers and the latter would then need time to meet priority need in areas of the country that lack good quality options. And DfE would need to design the digital platform we allude to above, if it decided to develop such a vehicle.
- To give the above actors sufficient time to adapt, there should be a lead time of at least one full academic year before the mandatory obligations take full effect. Some schools would be able to start earlier, particularly where they had pre-existing programmes on which to build.

87 DfE, 2020. 'Process evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942557/ELS\\_Process\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942557/ELS_Process_Evaluation.pdf)]

88 Ibid

89 Ibid

90 Policy Exchange, 2016. 'Only a matter of time' [accessed via: <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/only-a-matter-of-time.pdf>]

91 DfE, 2020. 'Process evaluation of the Essential Life Skills programme' [accessed via: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942557/ELS\\_Process\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942557/ELS_Process_Evaluation.pdf)]