

Energize

Active Partnership
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin



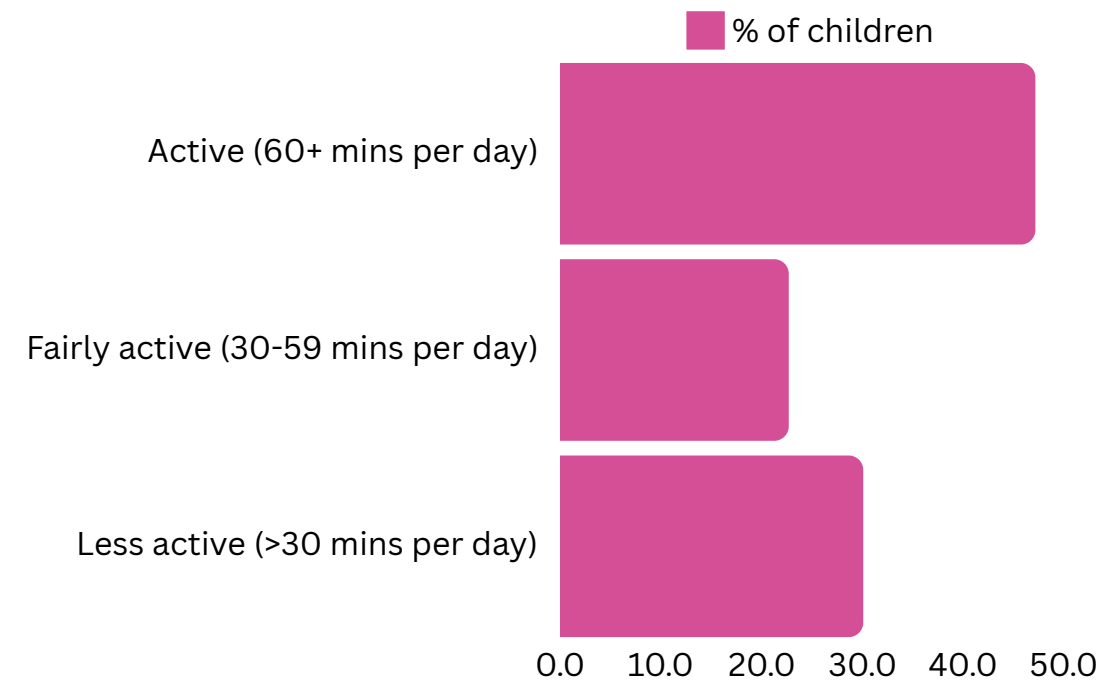
CREATING ACTIVE SCHOOLS PILOT LEARNING REPORT SEPT 2023



**CREATING
ACTIVE
SCHOOLS**

BACKGROUND

Less than half of children meet the Chief Medical Officer's guideline of 60 minutes of daily activity, as shown by the Sport England Active Lives Survey for Children and Young People.

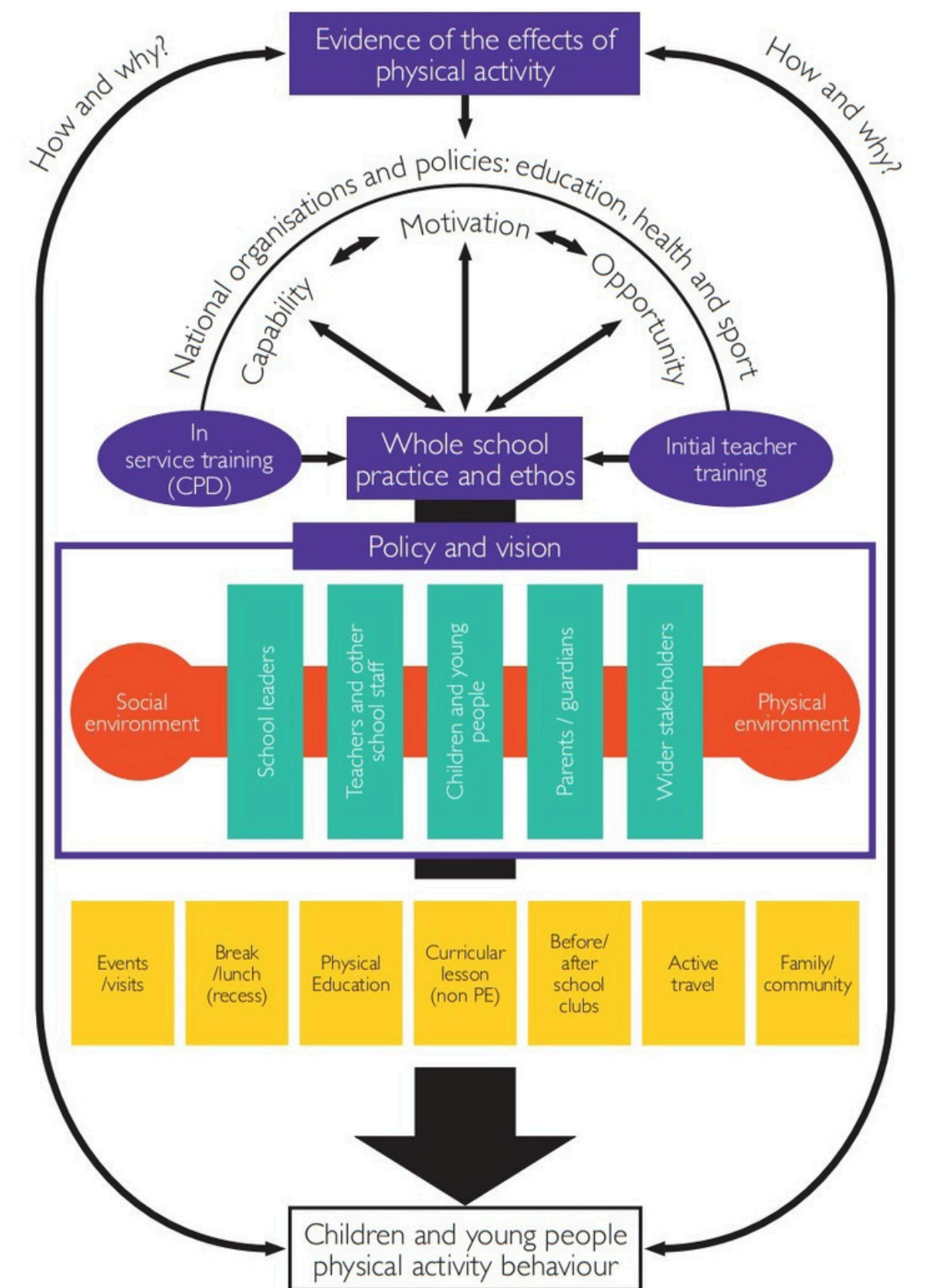


With continued pressure on schools to improve academic attainment, physical activity is often seen as an 'add-on' rather than a tool to improve whole school outcomes.

The Creating Active Schools (CAS) Framework was developed by researchers and practitioners in 2019 to provide a structure to embed physical activity at the heart of a school's ethos and culture. It promotes a whole systems approach to school improvement with all staff recognising the benefits and incorporating it into their daily practise.

The framework was used to support systems change as part of a Sport England local delivery pilot in Bradford in 2019 and was rolled out as a national pilot during the academic year 2021-22 across 17 Active Partnerships.

CAS Framework



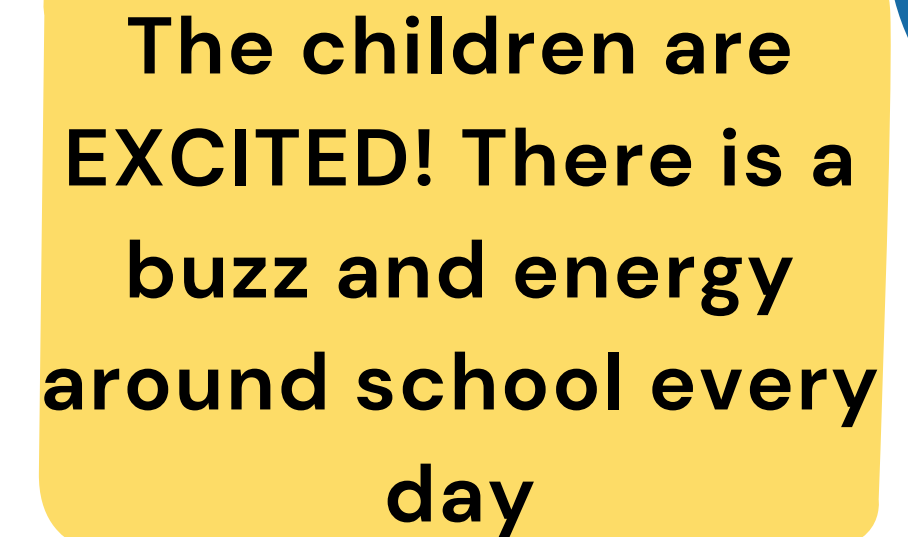
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last 18 months, Energize Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin have supported 18 schools as part of the CAS national pilot. The pilot has helped schools to start embedding physical activity into their ethos and culture, by using the CAS framework to influence behaviour change.

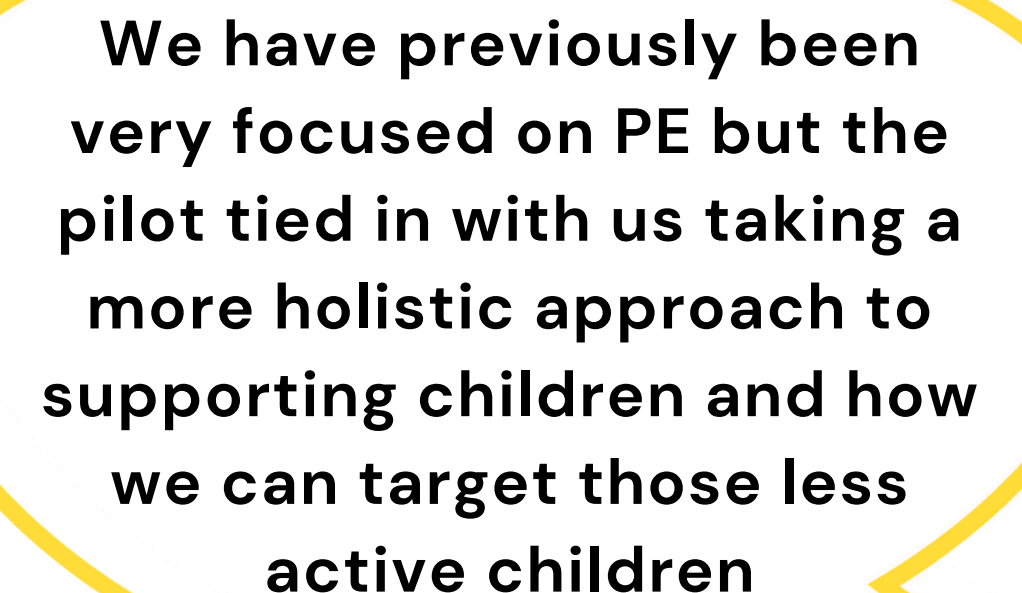
The key message from the pilot is that embedding physical activity into school's practice has had much wider benefits than just improving fitness and activity levels:

- **93%** schools reported pupil wellbeing had improved
- **74%** reported behaviour had improved
- **80%** reported children's social skills had improved
- **87%** reported movement and physical activity are a daily habit and are embedded throughout the whole school
- **100%** reported that staff mindsets had changed and staff are more likely to advocate for movement and physical activity

However, time and staff capacity remain a significant challenge in maintaining progress. Even in schools with the capability, opportunity and motivation to change behaviours, regular review meetings and support from Energize throughout the pilot, was needed to ensure embedding physical activity remained a priority and held them accountable.



**The children are
EXCITED! There is a
buzz and energy
around school every
day**



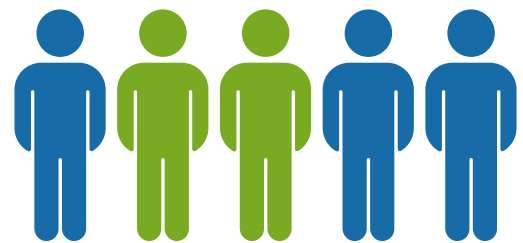
**We have previously been
very focused on PE but the
pilot tied in with us taking a
more holistic approach to
supporting children and how
we can target those less
active children**

DEVELOPING THE PILOT

In phase 1, 12 schools were recruited and approached on an individual basis:

- 7 targeted schools were selected based on Free School Meal, National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), attainment and attendance data. Schools received a whole school training session, as well as additional funding and Energize support to complete the online profiling toolkit, create their action plan and hold half termly review and planning meetings.
- An additional 5 non targeted schools participated through an expression of interest form. These schools received the whole school training session and were provided with the CAS licence to independently complete the online profiling toolkit.

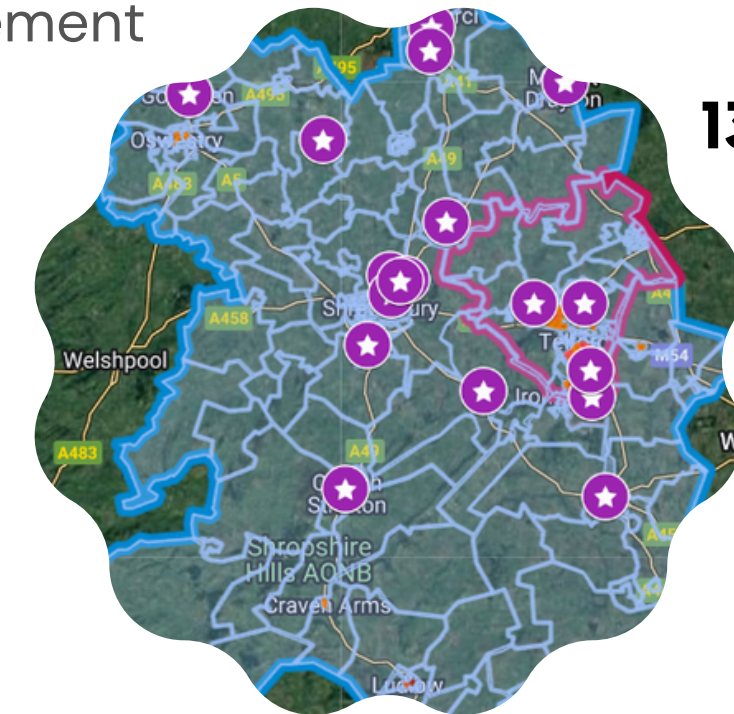
In phase 2, a further 6 schools were recruited at a CAS sharing event. These schools were selected based on having an established relationship with Energize, as we were keen to ensure their commitment to implementing the framework. Phase 2 schools received the whole school training session, support to create their action plan and half termly review and planning meetings. Unlike the targeted phase 1 schools, they received no financial support. Community of learning sharing sessions were held termly online but with limited engagement from the pilot schools.



**OVER 5,700
PUPILS
SUPPORTED**



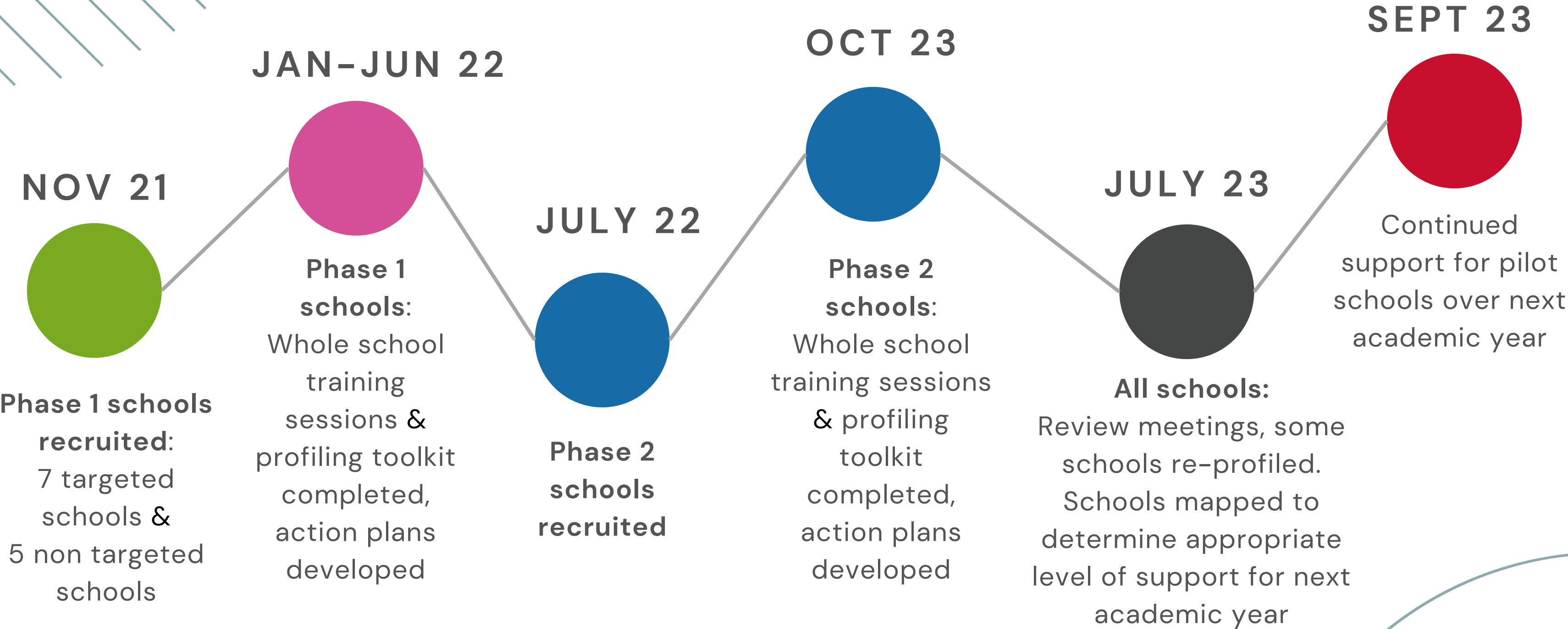
**18 PILOT SCHOOLS:
17 PRIMARY
1 SECONDARY**



**13 SHROPSHIRE
SCHOOLS
5 TELFORD
AND
WREKIN
SCHOOLS**



PILOT TIMELINE



→
Half termly review and planning meetings with schools and Community of Learning sessions

THE IMPACT

To assess the difference made in schools, a number of measures were considered:

- Staff surveys mid-way and at the end of the year
- Performance scores for each of the elements of the CAS Framework (policies, environments, stakeholders and opportunities) at the start of the year versus the end
- Focus groups – both staff and pupil
- Active Lives Survey for Children and Young People



100% schools reported staff mindsets have changed and staff are more likely to advocate for movement and physical activity



87% schools reported movement and physical activity has become a daily habit and is embedded throughout the school



80% schools reported children's social skills have improved



THE IMPACT

Behaviour

Behaviour improved inside the classroom and outside. Schools reported fewer low level incidents on the playground with children showing respect and understanding.



73% schools reported pupil behaviour has improved

Wellbeing

Wellbeing has improved – there is greater awareness among pupils of the importance of keeping physically active and of the mental and physical benefits it brings. Children can articulate how to help themselves feel better.



93% schools reported pupils' wellbeing has improved

Emotional regulation

Emotional regulation has improved – children can process their thoughts and feelings better, meaning they come into the class ready to learn.

Learning

Pupils have better concentration in class and stamina for learning has improved. Regular use of active breaks helped pupils to focus better.

Children have commented on how much they enjoy lessons when they get to move around and be more practical and active

THE IMPACT

Staff confidence

Staff look for more opportunities to be active – they are more willing/enthusiastic to help pupils be more active.



100% schools reported staff confidence in using active learning and active breaks has increased

Pupil engagement

Schools are responding to pupil feedback around how they want to be active and want to be involved in the clubs and games being offered. Schools reported there was a greater interest in being active which in turn has provided more leadership opportunities for pupils.



100% schools reported pupil activity levels increased

Inclusion

SEND children responded particularly well to movement breaks – teachers reported they helped SEND pupils to settle, re-set and re-focus on tasks.

Pupils feel more involved in the decision making process in school and therefore more engaged in activities to increase their levels of activity

THE CHALLENGES

Time

Time constraints of the curriculum were reported as the biggest challenge. Schools reported that because there is no free time in the day, fitting everything in proved difficult.

Staff feel pressure to get academic work done

Parental support

Many schools found that they did not receive parental support for initiatives they were offering in school. There was also limited engagement when schools tried to capture parental voice. Some schools who tried to run parent workshops on how to be active at home and the importance of physical activity, had to cancel on multiple occasions due to lack of interest.

Staff capacity & motivation

Overall, staff were enthusiastic and motivated about the pilot but capacity and having time to reflect, consider and develop ideas was challenging, even with SLT support.

Providing staffing at break and lunchtimes to mentor or support junior leaders was difficult.

Staffing changes slowed progress in some schools.

Having time to consider and develop ideas

Engaging the least active children

It was sometimes difficult for schools to encourage targeted pupils to join clubs. Pupils were self-conscious and reluctant to participate.

THE LEARNINGS

Culture is important

The culture needs to be right to achieve behaviour change. SLT need to **allocate** time to plan, deliver and support staff but also time to stop and reflect.

There needs to be an acknowledgement of the fact that behaviour change requires a long term approach.

The profiling toolkit could be overwhelming

Some schools found the profiling toolkit and the number of documents generated as part of their plan, overwhelming. Consequently, the profiling toolkit **wasn't frequently used and only used by the majority of schools when it came to the review meetings with Energize.**

As the CPD modules were launched later than anticipated and schools were not logging onto the toolkit, many schools did not use the online training available.

Motivation is key

Success was dependent on finding the right decision maker. In some instances, this wasn't the headteacher, but a respected, committed member of staff who was able to motivate their peers.

That said, having SLT involved was important, since they have an overview of what the whole school is doing and can align actions to the School Development Plan, embedding physical activity into improving whole school outcomes.



THE LEARNINGS

All staff need to be aligned to the vision

The whole school training session was vital in aligning everyone to the same vision and kickstarted staff's enthusiasm and motivation for the pilot.

Small wins had big impact

Schools were nervous as to whether they were doing 'enough', but small wins had a big impact and gave schools confidence to build on their progress.



Schools valued having a champion

Holding regular review and planning meetings kept the pilot a priority and maintained momentum. Schools reported that it held them accountable. Even the most proactive and motivated schools fed back that having a CAS 'champion' or mentor was beneficial.



CONCLUSION

The principal message from the pilot is that it has helped schools to start embedding physical activity into their ethos and culture. All schools found that building physical activity into their school's practice had much wider benefits than just improving children's fitness and activity levels. Behaviour, wellbeing, social skills, focus and concentration in the classroom all improved.

In the pilot schools, physical activity has been a catalyst for whole school improvement but this has required SLT support, all staff being aligned to the school vision and a long term commitment to behaviour change.

A key success factor has been having an external champion to support action planning, review and monitoring. Schools have reported that they valued being held accountable and this helped to keep it a priority amongst the many other priorities in their school development plan. The advantages to schools and their pupils are clear, but the challenge moving forward is how from a capacity perspective, this can be supported to expand and replicate the approach to enable other schools to benefit from using the framework.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

let us know @ claire.mansfield@energizestw.org.uk



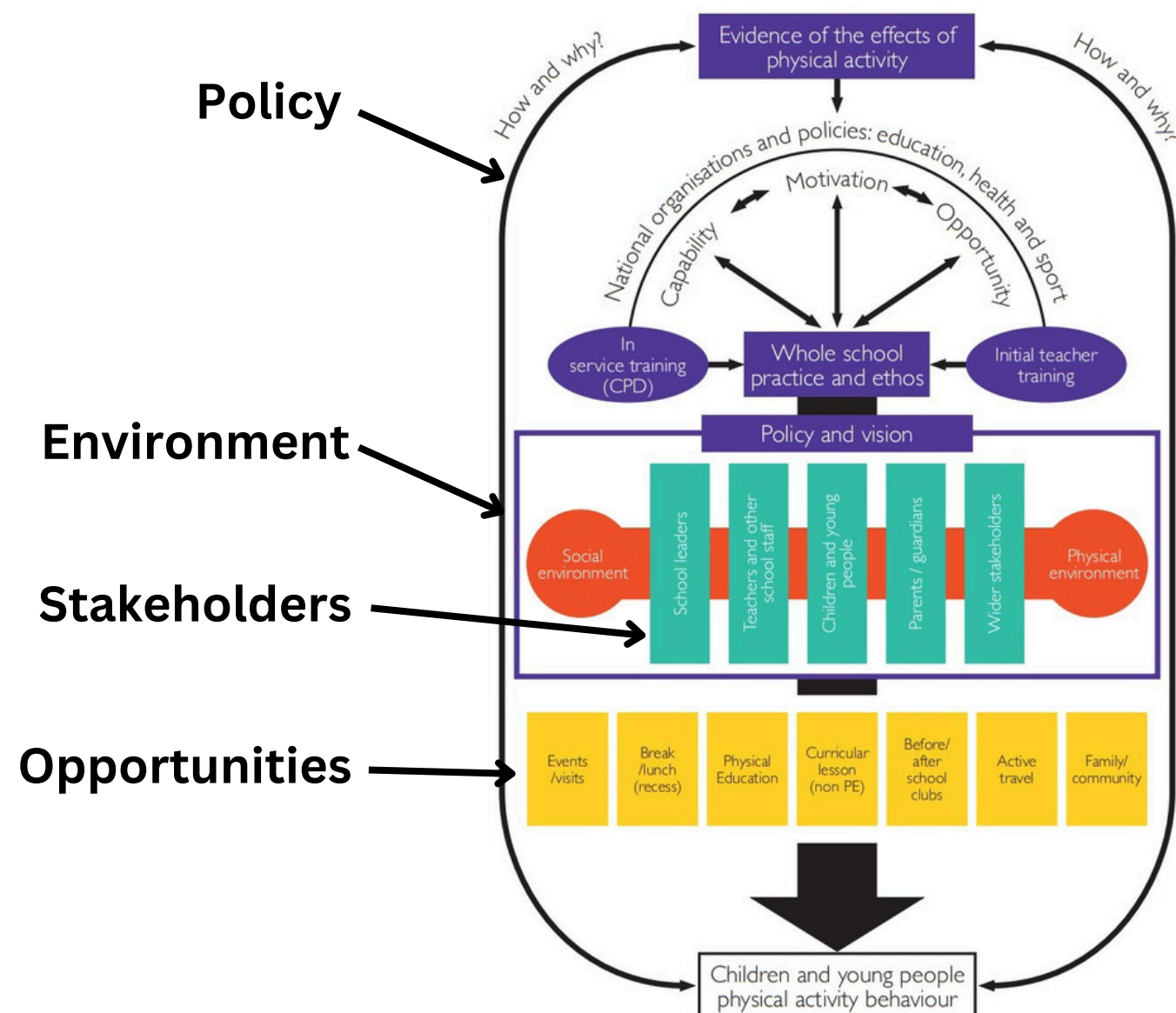
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Question	March 2023	July 2023
Pupil activity levels have increased	100%	100%
A lot	55%	53%
Movement and PA has become a daily habit and is embedded throughout the whole school	55%	87%
Pupils mental wellbeing has improved	91%	93%
A lot	45%	47%
Pupil behaviour has improved	72%	73%
A lot	27%	47%
Children's social skills have improved	72%	80%
A lot	27%	40%
Children are more socially connected	63%	73%
Staff confidence in teaching PE has improved	91%	87%
A lot	36%	40%
Staff confidence in using active learning and active breaks has increased	91%	100%
A lot	55%	53%
Staff mindsets have changed. Staff are more likely to advocate for movement and physical activity	91%	100%
Number of responses	11 responses	15 schools

APPENDIX 2 - TOOLKIT PERFORMANCE SCORES

All schools saw an increase in their overall performance score. The largest increase was seen in the stakeholder element of the framework. This may be due to CAS prompting schools to engage with stakeholders as one of the CAS focus areas.



School name	Year 1					Year 2				
	Overall	Policy	Envt	Sholders	Opps	Overall	Policy	Envt	Sholders	Opps
Dothill	30	29	35	19	41	53 +23%	65 +36%	47 +12%	48 +29%	55 +14%
Windmill Primary	59	54	77	44	63	65 +6%	64 +10%	79 +2%	53 +9%	68 +5%
St Marys Shawbury	23	22	38	11	23	61 +38%	36 +14%	73 +35%	58 +47%	55 +32%
St John's Catholic Primary School	54	55	59	45	59	69 +15%	78 +23%	70 +11%	62 +17%	68 +9%
Oakmeadow	44	52	54	31	42	56 +12%	52	54	55 +24%	63 +21%
Cockshutt	62	48	74	56	73	69 +7%	57 +9%	81 +7%	60 +4%	80 +7%
Harlescott	47	58	59	29	45	50 +3%	58	59	35 +6%	50 +5%
St Lawrence	47	40	63	38	48	65 +18%	40	59	71 +33%	90 +42%
Lilleshall	76	83	90	59	75	85 +9%	93 +10%	90	74 +15%	83 +8%
Average increase						+15%	+11%	+7%	+20%	+16%

APPENDIX 3 - PUPIL FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

I feel happy
when I get
active
Zach, aged 6

How does being active make you feel?

learn
concentration
exalted
proud
breathless
humid
lucky
settled
hungry
concentrate
exhausted
hot
amazing
tired
ready
boost
relaxed
mature
blessed
confidence
joyful
rested
sweaty
warm
refreshed
trembling
fantastic
brilliant
calm
energetic
graceful
able
emotional
excited
fresh
fun
sleepy
boiling
flabbergasted
thirsty
motivated
cool
boosted
smarter
happy
confident

Being active is
important since it
helps you centre
yourself and be
ready
Jack, aged 11

Physical
activity helps
our mental
health
Kayleigh, year 4



HOW BEING ACTIVE MAKES PUPILS FEEL - CREATIVE WRITING

Smiling on the playground,
Positive people playing fun
games,
Opportunities opened to
everyone,
Ready for learning after
brain breaks,
Teachers make it fun
Elsie, aged 9



As my energy grows,
Calming down, my
happiness grows,
Energised and
exhausted,
I sit and rest,
Ready to start,
Ready to shine,
Knowing I've had fun
Nell aged 11

Click on the image above to watch
Patrick and Theodore's rap on how
being active makes them feel
<https://bit.ly/3OYdRWc>

APPENDIX 4 - ACTIVE LIVES DATA

Wrockwardine Wood C of E Junior School Active Lives Data Autumn 2021 vs Autumn 2022		
	Wrockwardine Wood Aut 21	Wrockwardine Wood Aut 22
% pupils who are active (60+ mins per day)	29%	32%
% pupils who are fairly active (30-59 mins per day)	20%	24%
% pupils who are less active (less than 30 mins per day)	35%	34%
% pupils doing 30+ mins activity during school hours	20%	24%
% pupils doing 30+ mins activity outside school hours	35%	34%
% pupils who feel confident when exercising and playing sports	40%	54%
% pupils who enjoy taking part in exercise and sports	46%	58%
% pupils who understand why exercise and sports are good for them	67%	68%
% pupils who find exercise and sports easy	24%	46%
How happy did you feel yesterday?	6.8	8.2
If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it	43%	44%
How much do you feel you can trust people who are a similar age to you?	24%	61%
Number of pupils with 3+ positive attitudes	34%	53%
Healthy Schools Rating	None	Gold

Source: Sport England

Due to the different timescales involved for schools starting their CAS journey, the Active Lives data is currently incomplete. We will not receive school reports for some schools until next academic year.

One of our pilot schools who were able to measure year on year data, saw improvements in activity levels and physical literacy. The biggest improvements were seen in social trust (up 37%), finding exercise and sports easy (up by 22%), confidence when exercising and playing sport (up by 14%) and enjoyment in taking part in exercise and sport (up by 12%).

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WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

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