Together an Active Future

Co-creating meaningful school-based research with schools, for schools, and why this feels different

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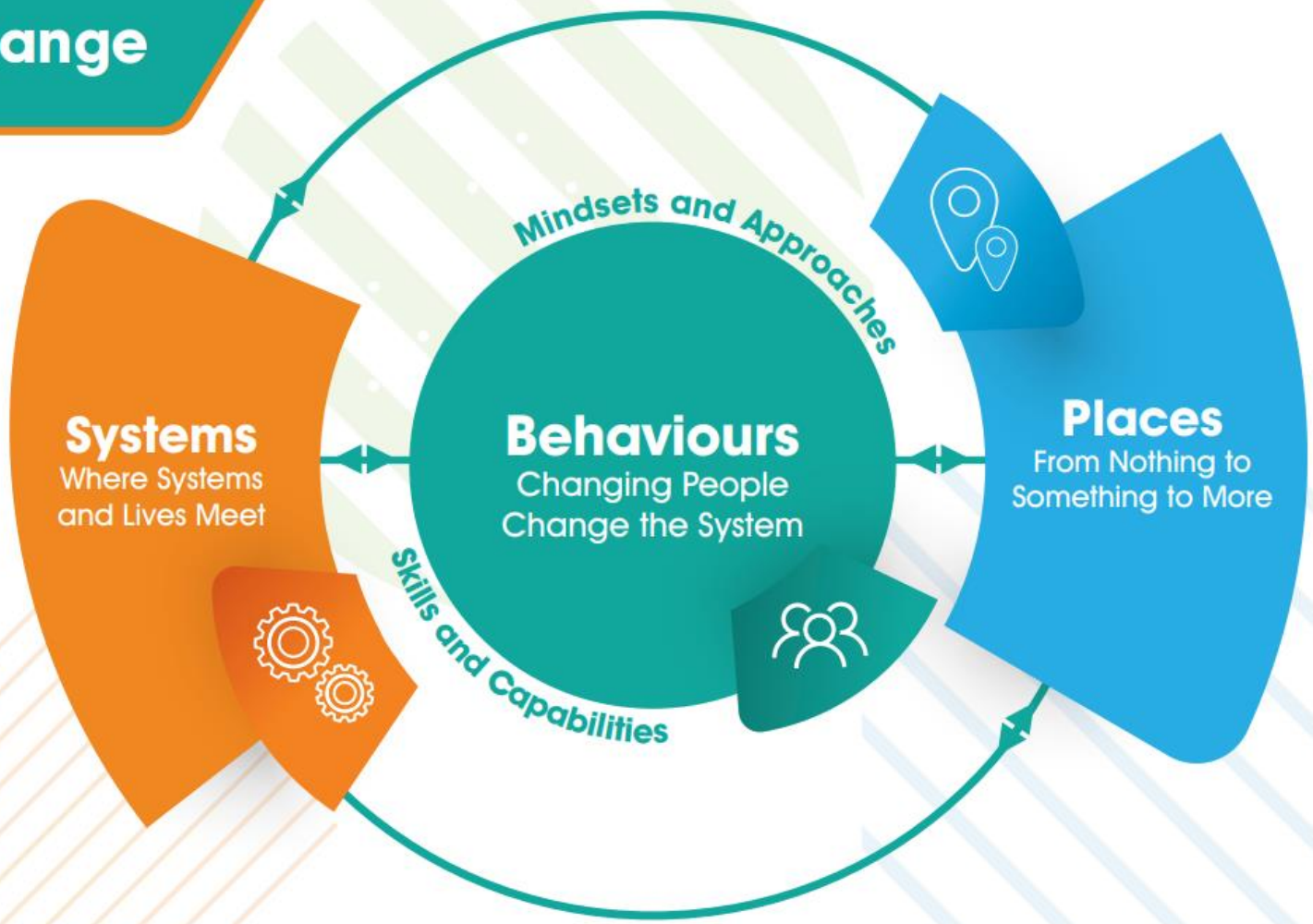
Model for Change

Together an Active Future



What does this look like in practice?

Changing People, Change the System

Outsiders working with Insiders

Research Process

Benefits of Co-creation

- **Contribution:** Harness different perspectives and skills.
- **Sharing of power:** Research is jointly owned and encourages working together.
- **Respect:** Everyone is of equal importance.
- **Reciprocity:** Everyone benefits from working together.

NIHR, (2021)

Summary of our Research Protocol

- Semi-structured Interviews
- Engagement with Personal and Professional Development.

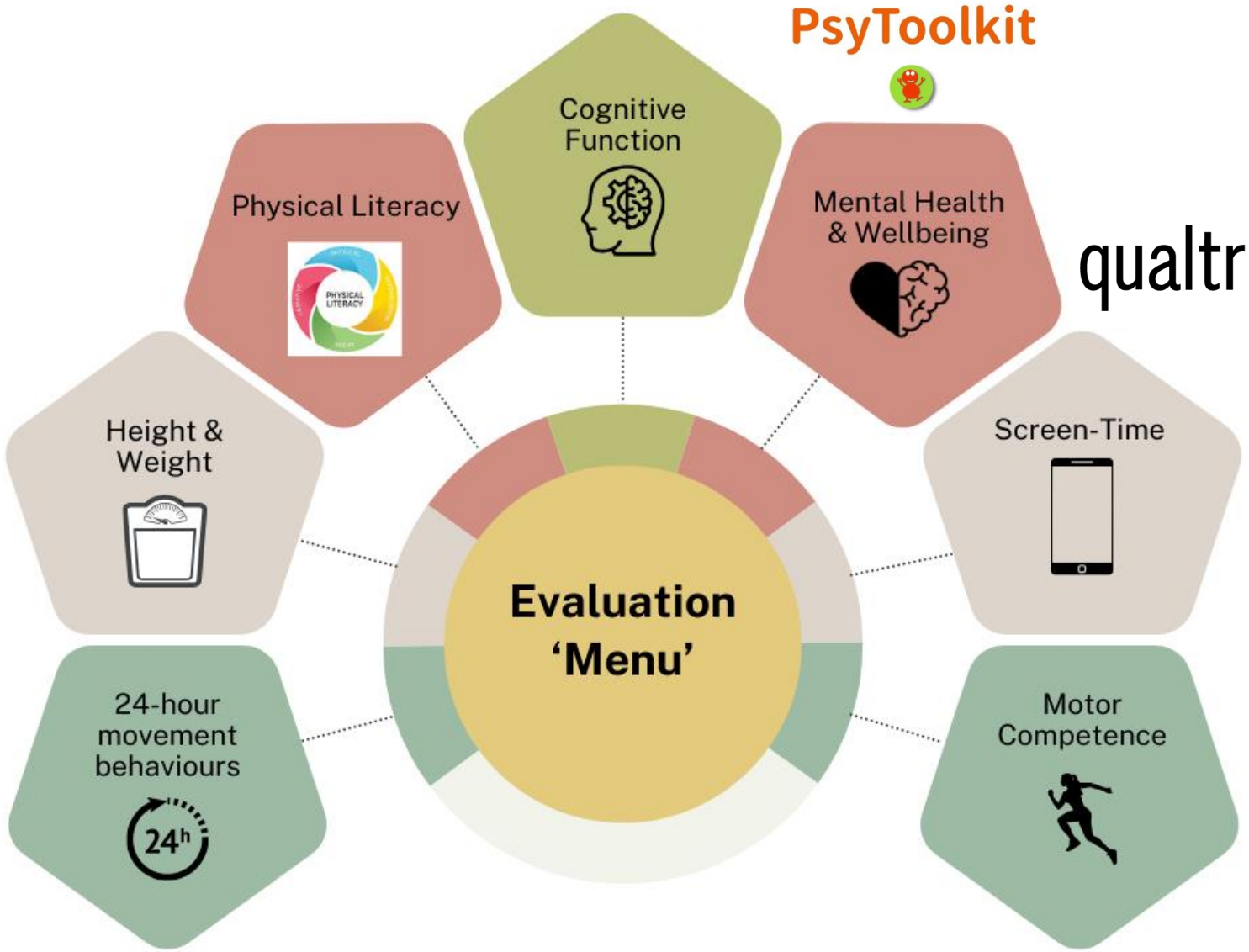
- 24-hour Movement Behaviours
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Motor Competence
- Physical Literacy
- Cognitive Function
- Height & Weight

- Ripple Effects Mapping
- Creating Active School Scores
- Stories of Significant Change

Nobles et al. (2022)

ehu.ac.uk

Co-creation of Measures

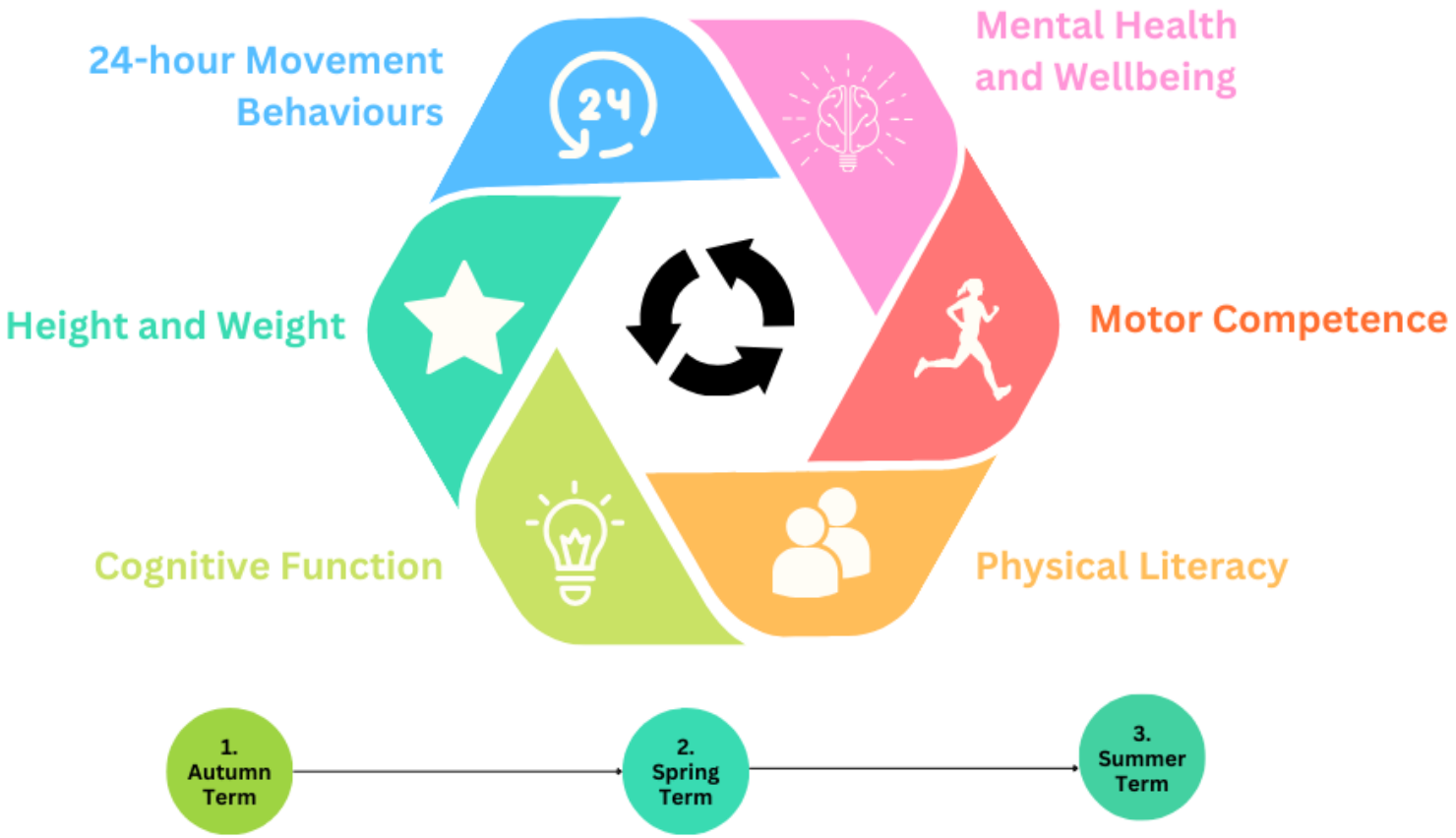


- What's involved?
- How?
- Resources needed
- Time
- Outputs

Other Measures:

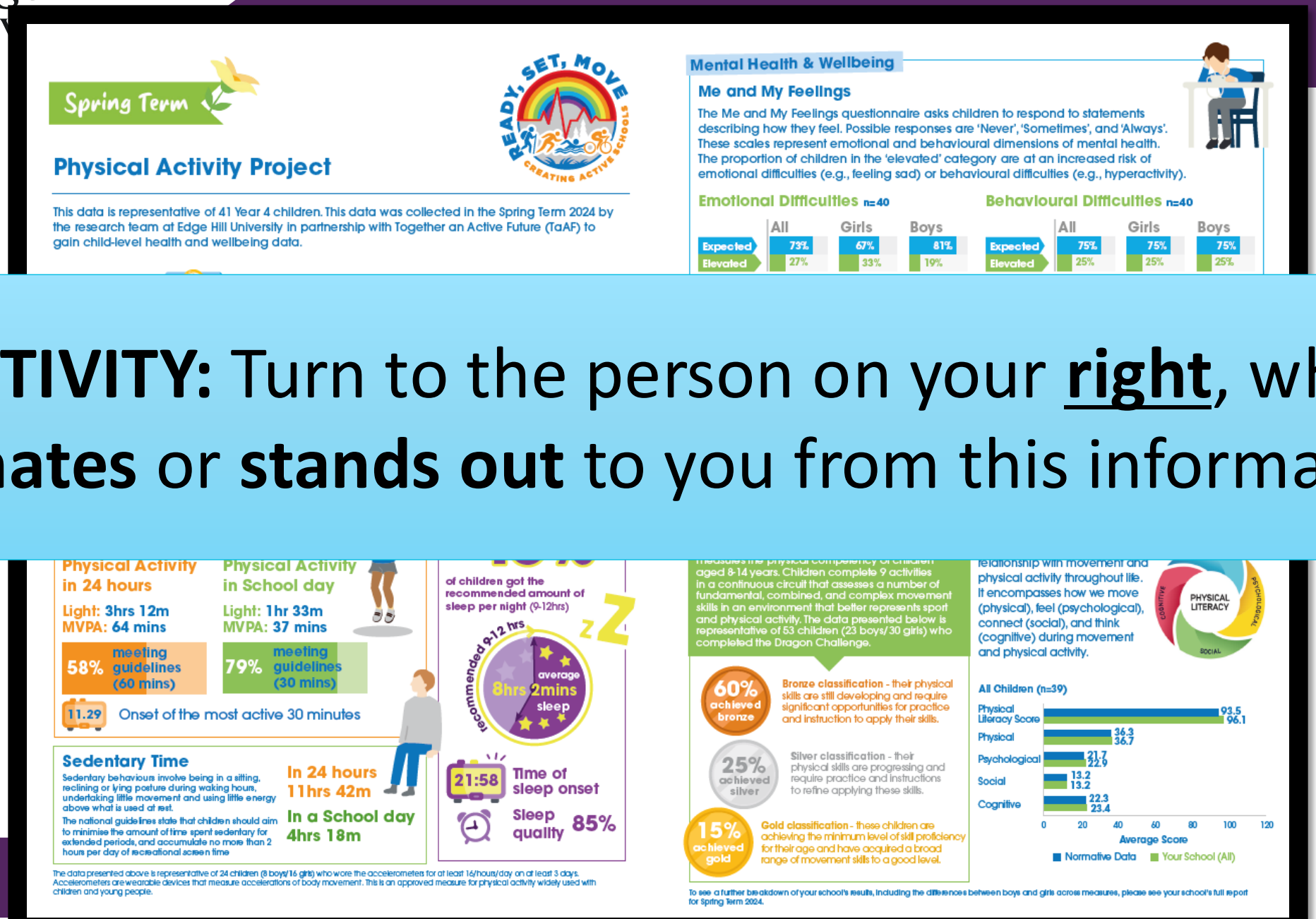
- Cardiorespiratory fitness
- Muscular fitness
- Self-perception Profile
- Social support for PA

Child-level Data & Sample



- **280** children (49% Boys; 51% Girls)
- **8** schools (7 Primary, 1 Secondary)
- Burnley and Rossendale
- Free School Meal Eligibility = **17%**
- Deprivation Decile: Mean= 5; Range 1-10.
- Over **50%** of children are in the bottom 4 deciles (most deprived).
- **80%** White British; **15%** South Asian

Dissemination of Meaningful Outputs


Spring Term

Physical Activity Project

This data is representative of 41 Year 4 children. This data was collected in the Spring Term 2024 by the research team at Edge Hill University in partnership with Together an Active Future (TaAF) to gain child-level health and wellbeing data.

READY, SET, MOVE
CREATING ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Me and My Feelings

The Me and My Feelings questionnaire asks children to respond to statements describing how they feel. Possible responses are 'Never', 'Sometimes', and 'Always'. These scales represent emotional and behavioural dimensions of mental health. The proportion of children in the 'elevated' category are at an increased risk of emotional difficulties (e.g., feeling sad) or behavioural difficulties (e.g., hyperactivity).

Emotional Difficulties n=40

	All	Girls	Boys
Expected	73%	67%	81%
Elevated	27%	33%	19%

Behavioural Difficulties n=40

	All	Girls	Boys
Expected	75%	75%	75%
Elevated	25%	25%	25%

Physical Activity in 24 hours
Light: 3hrs 12m
MVPA: 64 mins
58% meeting guidelines (60 mins)

Physical Activity in School day
Light: 1hr 33m
MVPA: 37 mins
79% meeting guidelines (30 mins)

11.29 Onset of the most active 30 minutes

of children got the recommended amount of sleep per night (9-12hrs)

Recommended 9-12 hrs
average 8hrs 2mins sleep

Sedentary Time

Sedentary behaviours involve being in a sitting, reclining or lying posture during waking hours, undertaking little movement and using little energy above what is used at rest.

The national guidelines state that children should aim to minimise the amount of time spent sedentary for extended periods, and accumulate no more than 2 hours per day of recreational screen time

In 24 hours 11hrs 42m

In a School day 4hrs 18m

21:58 Time of sleep onset

Sleep quality 85%

The data presented above is representative of 24 children (8 boys/16 girls) who wore the accelerometers for at least 16/hours/day on at least 3 days. Accelerometers are wearable devices that measure accelerations of body movement. This is an approved measure for physical activity widely used with children and young people.

aged 8-14 years. Children complete 9 activities in a continuous circuit that assesses a number of fundamental, combined, and complex movement skills in an environment that better represents sport and physical activity. The data presented below is representative of 53 children (23 boys/30 girls) who completed the Dragon Challenge.

relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life. It encompasses how we move (physical), feel (psychological), connect (social), and think (cognitive) during movement and physical activity.

PHYSICAL LITERACY
COGNITIVE
PSYCHOLOGICAL
SOCIAL

60% achieved bronze — **Bronze classification** - their physical skills are still developing and require significant opportunities for practice and instruction to apply their skills.

25% achieved silver — **Silver classification** - their physical skills are progressing and require practice and instructions to refine applying these skills.

15% achieved gold — **Gold classification** - these children are achieving the minimum level of skill proficiency for their age and have acquired a broad range of movement skills to a good level.

All Children (n=39)

	Normative Data	Your School (All)
Physical Literacy Score	93.5	96.1
Physical	36.3	36.7
Psychological	21.7	22.9
Social	13.2	13.2
Cognitive	22.3	23.4

0 20 40 60 80 100 120
Average Score

To see a further breakdown of your school's results, including the differences between boys and girls across measures, please see your school's full report for Spring Term 2024.

ACTIVITY: Turn to the person on your **right**, what **resonates** or **stands out** to you from this information?

Why does this project feel different?

1. Dissemination of meaningful outputs.
2. Developed a social network of teachers.
3. Middle Leaders are taking ownership of the project.
4. Building strong relationships has been advantageous to the data collection process.
5. Researchers and practitioners in the same space.

Challenges & Reflections…

Last Year

- We've collected **a lot** of data in a short space of time.
- Lack of **capacity** and **resource** to meet the demand.
- Engaging with **30+ schools** across Pennine Lancashire.
- Being **adaptive** and **responsive** to new ways of working to evaluate whole-school approaches.

This Year

- **Disseminating** research evidence.
- Reducing the **volume** of data collection (time points).
- Working with middle leaders **one-to-one**.
- An embedded research role lends itself to a **coaching role** presenting an opportunity for continuous and shared improvement.

Edge Hill University

Key Takeaways

Schools are complex dynamic systems which require a **different approach** to embedding physical activity.

Value of an **embedded researcher** within whole school approaches to physical activity.

Make research **relational**, not transactional!

Communicate outputs in formats that are **meaningful** for school stakeholders.

Being **brave** and doing things differently is necessary when working with schools to change attitudes, behaviours, and systems.

Thank you for listening!

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Acknowledgements

- Middle Leaders and Children
- Helen Tyson and Emily Brady-Young (Together an Active Future)
- Prof. Stuart Fairclough, Dr Richard Tyler & Dr Mhairi MacDonald
- Jordan Banks, Ayva-Mae Gilmour & Peter Edwards (EHU MRes students)

References

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