



Programme Evaluation December 2017

Background:

Friends of the Award in Edinburgh and the Lothians (FOTA) is a charity which supports the delivery of the youth development awards (such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The majority of the charity's work is in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council, where expertise has been developed in working with young people from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds. Evaluation of our work has provided strong evidence that involvement in youth development awards builds self-confidence and develops a range of skills including communication, teamwork and problem solving. Participants are better equipped to face future life challenges.

From our work it was evident that for many of the young people who had difficulty in coping with secondary education, the problems began through the transition period from primary to secondary education. This view was shared by educationalists in Edinburgh. In 2010, working in partnership with a range of teachers and educationalists from City of Edinburgh Council, FOTA developed a programme for children and young people aged 10 to 14 years old – the Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS). JASS is designed to provide holistic development of young people over four sections – Get Active, Stay Active, Adventure, Me and My World, & My Interests - requiring commitment over time.

The intention of JASS is to prepare primary school pupils for the transition challenges from primary to secondary education through:

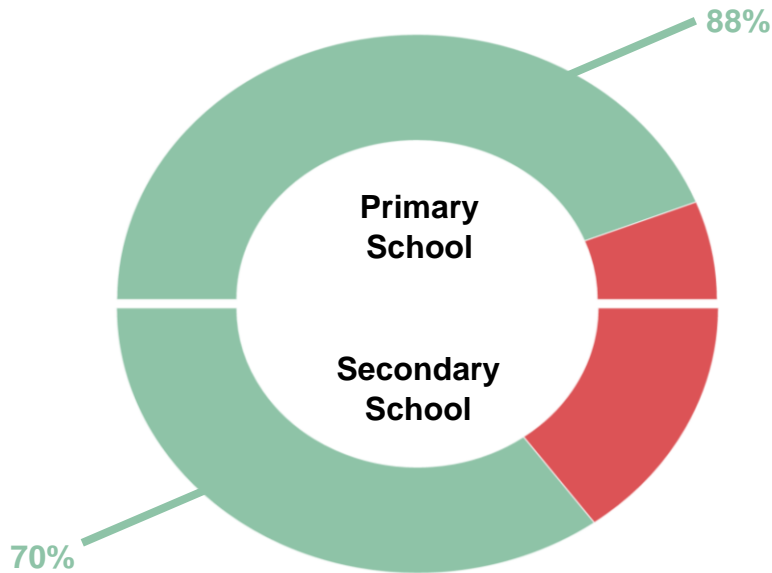
- Raising self-confidence.
- Developing key interpersonal skills (including communication, teamwork and problem solving)
- Developing sustainable healthy living habits.
- Developing an understanding for and empathy with community.

Due to the changing nature of education, and the development of technological competence from a young age, it was decided that the JASS programme should embrace change to ensure the continued development opportunities for young people. After a period of refinement as well as extensive testing and piloting with local schools, we are pleased to announce that e-Jass was launched.

Evaluation:

In November 2015 the first evaluation of JASS and e-Jass was undertaken, with responses gathered from 222 participants (122 primary, 100 secondary age) as well as 11 teachers from The results from this evaluation are as follows:

Enjoyment



Left: Response rate for enjoyment of JASS or e-Jass based on schooling level. 88% of Primary School participants and 70% of Secondary School participants noted they enjoyed taking part in the JASS programme.

Enjoyed Taking Part in JASS

Self Confidence:

All 11 teachers who responded indicated that they noted improved self confidence in their pupils as a consequence of participating in the JASS programme. Teacher comments included:

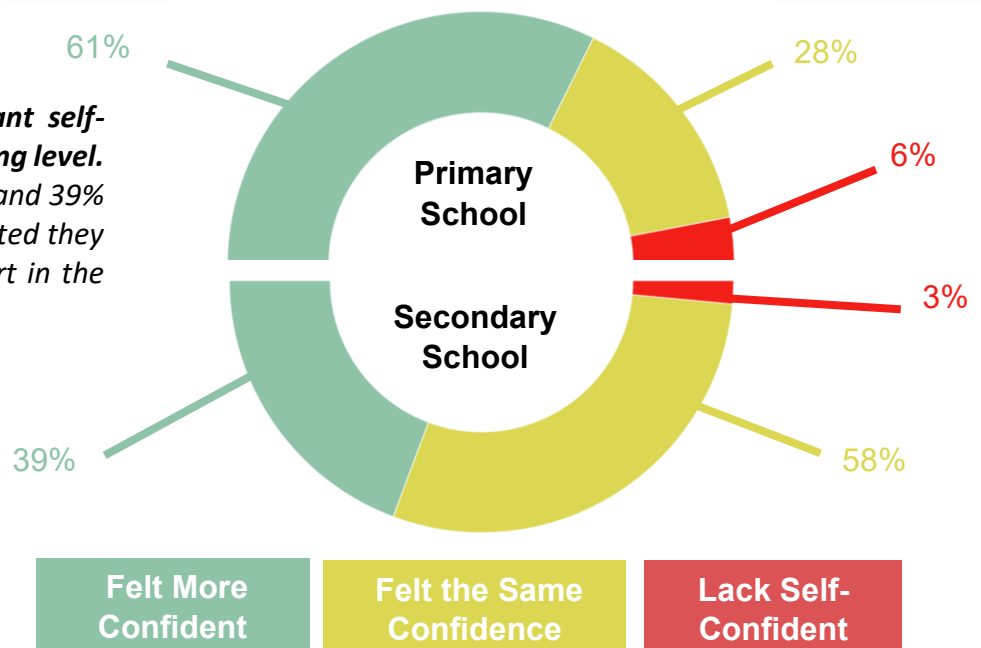
"Some pupils have become far more confident in their own abilities and have learnt not to be scared of unknown experiences. A lot of success for all pupils was achieved through JASS."

"JASS is fantastic at providing a goal centred individual programme and allows pupils to reflect. It encourages a growth mindset and self-confidence."

"I have found that the main benefit of JASS is the pupils' increased confidence in their ability to take on the challenge of organising themselves to set targets, do the activity, then get their own mentor to comment and find evidence."

"The JASS award has the potential to encourage independence, responsibility and improve self-confidence."

Right: Response rate for participant self-confidences levels based on schooling level. 61% of Primary School participants and 39% of Secondary School participants noted they felt more confident after taking part in the JASS programme.



"It encouraged me to believe in myself more and boosted my confidence a little".

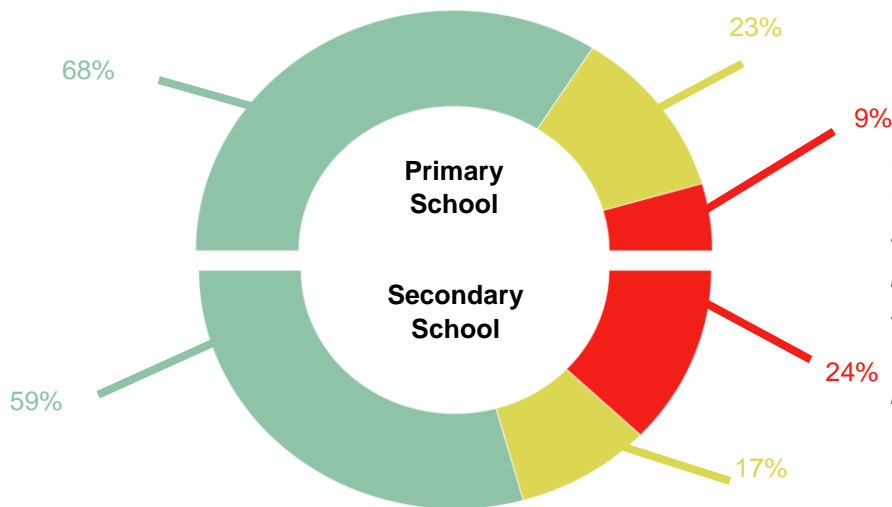
"I liked the JASS programme because it was fun to challenge myself and push myself to the limit."

Interpersonal Skills:

All 11 teachers reported that pupils were better communicators through participation in JASS with 8 stating that the programme improved the ability to work in a team. All 11 felt that the processes involved in the JASS programme better equipped their pupils to take on future challenges.

"The JASS programme's clearest benefit is to encourage and support students to take on new challenges and learn from them. Its' requirement to think about activities before and afterwards increases learning potential of each of these activities."

"Me and My World, as a school based team programme, really develops problem solving and teamwork."



Left: Participants response rate for ability to work in a team, split by schooling level. 68% of Primary School participants and 59% of Secondary School participants noted they felt able to work better in a team after taking part in the JASS programme.

Improved their Teamwork

Felt their teamwork was the same as before

Preferred to work on their own

"Get Active, Stay Active section was the hardest because I set a high standard for myself - but I met it."

"I liked the Den Building because I was a better team mate than normal"

"I liked how you had to organise it yourself."

"I enjoyed JASS because it was all great fun and I found it gave me lots of responsibility to make sure I finished it."

"I enjoyed challenging myself to complete a task."

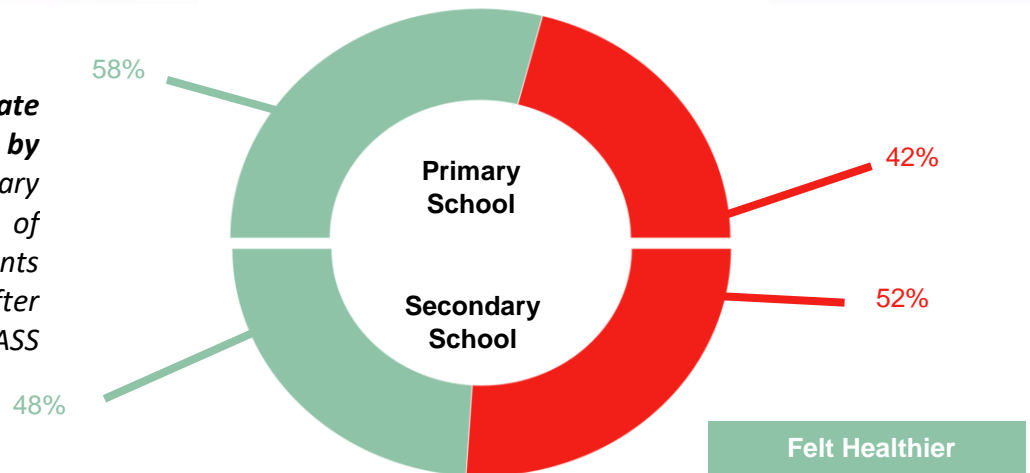
Developing healthy living habits through engagement in sport or other physical activity:

*Only JASS participants where asked about their healthy lifestyles and community projects.

"I enjoyed netball because I like playing in a team."

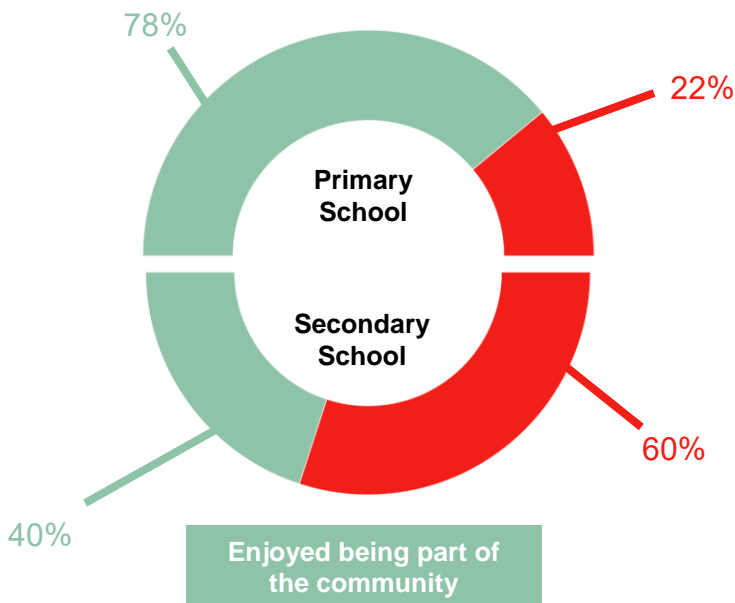
"I had a bad experience cycling before and I never thought I would ever go on a bike again. I did though and I cycled for 10 miles and I loved it. I am so proud of myself."

Right: Participants response rate for feeling healthier, split by schooling level. 58% of Primary School participants and 48% of Secondary School participants noted they felt healthier after taking part in the JASS programme.



Developing an understanding for and empathy with community:

This section brought a range of additional skills for participants: it improved their confidence and communication through engagement with people outside their normal sphere and developed a better understanding of their community.

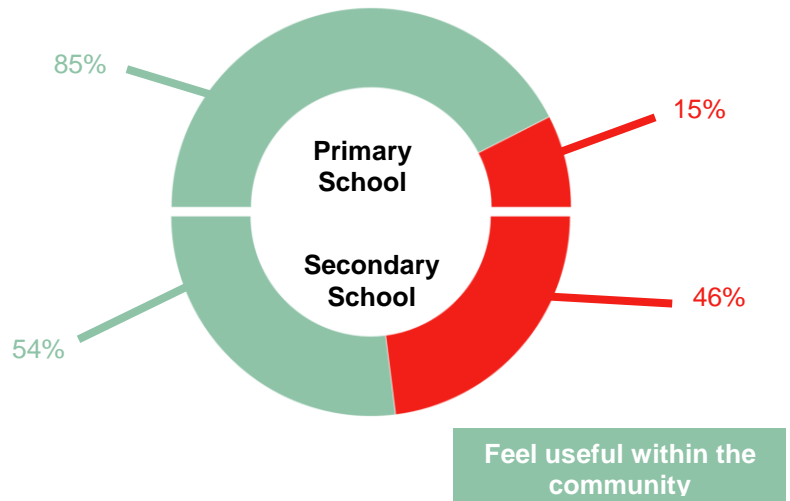


Left: Participants response rate for feeling a part of their community, split by schooling level. 78% of Primary School participants and 40% of Secondary School participants noted they felt a greater part of their community after taking part in the JASS programme.

"I learnt that we are all part of the same community and if we want things to get better we need to do something about it."

"I am painting the cemetery gates for Me and My World. It shows respect for the people who have died and the people who visit the cemetery."

Right: Participants response rate for a sense of purpose within their community, split by schooling level. 85% of Primary School participants and 54% of Secondary School participants noted they felt a greater a greater sense of purpose within their community after taking part in the JASS programme.



Conclusions:

This evaluation as a preliminary piece of work provides strong evidence that the JASS programme does provide primary school pupils with the skills needed to help them cope with transition from primary to secondary education. Through informal discussions with primary school teachers it is clear that it is a valuable method of empowering pupils to make their own decisions, set their own targets and to reflect on the success of their own efforts. Through this process it builds self-confidence, better organisational, communication and interpersonal skills.

"The JASS programme's clearest benefit is to encourage and support students to take on new challenges and learn from them. Its' requirement to think about activities before and afterwards increases the learning potential of each of these activities."

Responses from secondary schools are slightly different. While the impact of the programme is the same for some pupils as it is at primary, this is by no means universal. It is clear that, while most secondary schools we spoke to are keen to use the programme, there are different challenges in relation to timetabling and staffing the programme than in primary. We need to work with secondary schools to find out what additional support would assist them to use the programme and to establish best practice.

Further evaluation needs to be carried out in respect of JASS in Additional Support Needs settings who report using JASS very effectively for the benefit of their pupils.