

# **Learning Beyond the Classroom: The State of the Nation 2023**

**A series of evidence-based reports examining  
the impact and importance of learning beyond  
the classroom in modern Britain**



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An annual research project from Children's University Trust  
Written by Liam Nolan and Cordelia Howard with data analysis by Sukie Duhra

## About these reports

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Thank you for reading Children's University Trust's State of the Nation Reports. These reports are the culmination of an annual research project looking at everything we know about learning beyond the classroom in modern Britain. They are a series of evidence-based reports examining the impact of what goes on beyond the classroom on the lives of children and young people. Based on extensive data collated from a bespoke digital platform, Children's University Online, the aim of the reports is to inform and improve provision by providing educators, policy makers and stakeholders of all kinds with a broad set of insights about the current state of learning beyond the classroom in contemporary Britain.

Our 2023 reports are informed by data from:

- 70,000 children
- 19,400 activities
- 704,000 hours of recorded participation.

**Since 2021 our State of the Nation Reports have offered up an analysis of over 1 million hours of participation in learning beyond the classroom.**

This document is made up of a series of five reports compiled in one easy to read document. Should you wish to download copies of each section individually, or refer to past State of the Nation Reports or access further reading, please visit [childrensuniversity.co.uk/stateofthenation](https://childrensuniversity.co.uk/stateofthenation)

## Thank you for reading

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# Foreword: Helen O'Donnell, CEO, Children's University Trust



**“Over the past three years we have now analysed over 1,000,000 hours of learning. This is information that we want to see used by others and grow in subsequent years.”**

Earlier this year I announced that I will be stepping down as CEO of Children's University Trust in December. After 8 years in the role, I've seen huge developments and changes in my organisation and within our far-reaching network of delivery partners and schools. Nothing makes me prouder and more reflective than publishing this, our third set of State of the Nation Reports. Since 2021 these reports have been the culmination of an annual research project looking at everything we know about learning beyond the classroom in modern Britain.

No other organisation collects and collates this information as broadly and as comprehensively as Children's University. To be able to share this information with the intent of informing and improving provision of opportunities for children and young people, makes me proud. As legacies go, I'm pleased with this one.

When I joined Children's University, I made it my mission to answer the 'So what?' question. We had an active network and provided thousands of children with Passports to Learning each year as part of our programme. Encouraging, tracking, and celebrating children's participation was what the charity had done since its establishment in 2007, and in schools and pockets of the country for even longer. But so what? What was the impact of this?

These reports take data from the past 12 months and analyse provision of, and participation in, learning activities beyond the classroom. Using our bespoke digital platform, Children's University Online, we can gather data that allows us to see this learning through the lens of skills development, categories of learning, and engagement linked to the Gatsby Benchmarks. This year's reports are informed by data from:

- 70,000 children
- 19,400 activities
- 704,000 hours of participation

Having such data underpin a unique 12-month picture like this answers that 'so what?' question by showing the current and real impact of informal learning in a way that straddles school, home and community. For this to be the third set of such reports establishes Children's University as not only a provider of valuable information, but also the only organisation to be able to now show trends and patterns. Over the past three years we have now analysed over 1,000,000 hours of learning. This is information that we want to see used by others and grow in subsequent years.

# Foreword: Helen O'Donnell, CEO, Children's University Trust

**“We offer a means for collating school, home and community learning in one long-established framework. Rewarding children for participation in a wide range of opportunities under one umbrella is the kind of programme we should see being accessible to all children at times like this.”**

If you provide activities for children and want to see where your provision fits within the national context, you'll find it here. If you are looking for a tool and data set that will help your organisation audit your local assets, you'll find it here. If you're a policy maker looking for insights into the impact of learning beyond the classroom, you'll find it here.

The past 8 years have been and gone in a blur for me. But for everyone in the education sector it's been a time of exceptional change. I fought the urge to write 'unprecedented change', because as statutory education has always been intrinsically tied to the shifting whims of Governments, ministers and trends, there has always been a precedent in place for the instability of the education sector. That said, the past 8 years really have been exceptional in shifting the environment we work in. We have seen five Prime Ministers, presiding over nine Secretaries of State for Education. For the first time in modern history, we also saw a period of enforced school closures during the pandemic. The cumulative impact of all of this on our economy, living conditions and education is huge.

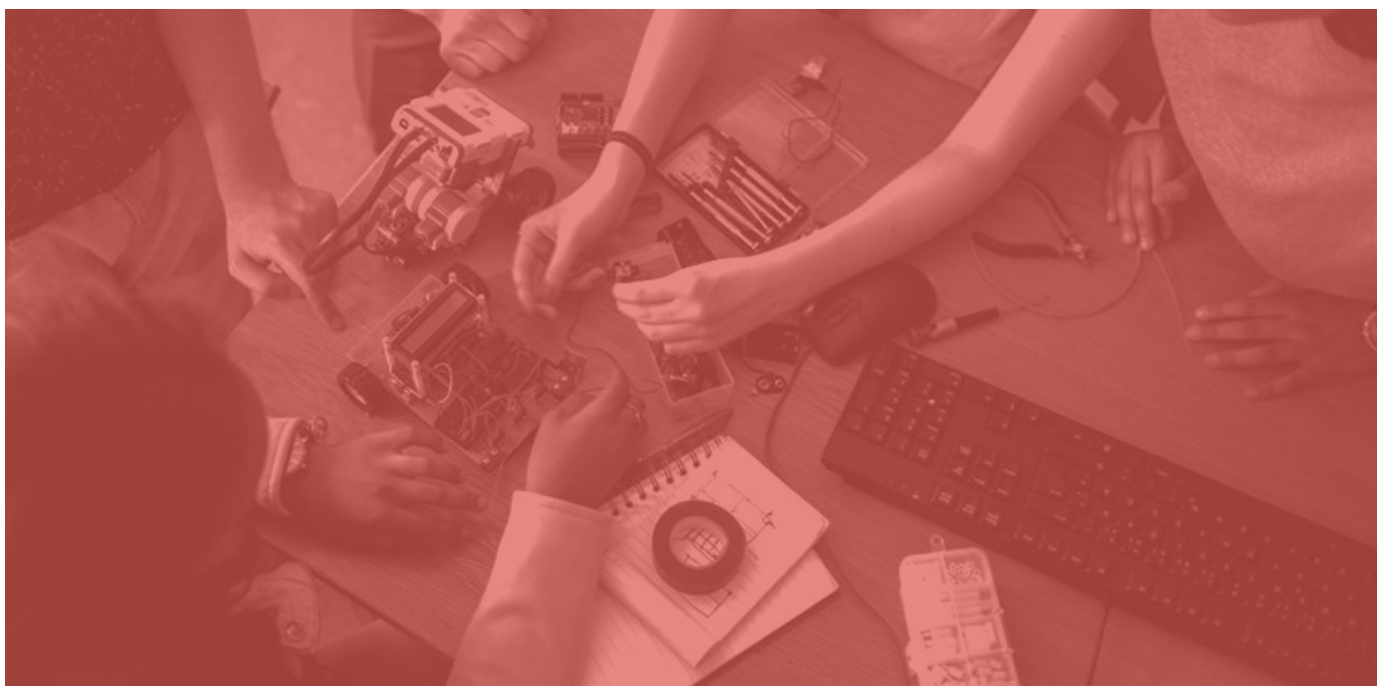
The world into which we publish this report is one deep in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. The cost of living, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose 7.9% during the period captured in this report. For the parents of children looking to engage with opportunities outside of the classroom, the reliance on the provision of free activities is greater than ever. Yet for schools, now facing reduced school funding at the same time as having to source staff pay increases from existing depleted budgets, the ability to provide free activities is harder than ever. 50% of school leaders have reported cutting trips and outings, with 26% cutting sports and extra-curricular spend<sup>1</sup>.

With such tightening of purse strings at every level, the need for efficiencies and focus is huge. It is here that I believe Children's University really shows its value. Children's University offers a means for collating school, home and community learning in one long-established framework. Rewarding children and young people for participation in a wide range of opportunities under one umbrella is arguably the kind of programme we should see being accessible to all children. It is my hope that this report shows the value and impact that coordinated and comprehensive support for our children and young people beyond the classroom can have.

## Footnotes:

1. <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/school-funding-and-pupil-premium-2023/>

# **Learning beyond the classroom: Provision and Participation**



**A profile of the activities available for children and young people  
and how they engage with learning beyond the classroom**

# Learning beyond the classroom: Provision and Participation

## Introduction

**“Essentially there is less time and money for schools, parents and partners to focus on learning beyond the classroom, despite its evidenced impact.”**

Learning beyond the classroom makes a proven positive impact on the lives of participants. There is robust evidence elsewhere in this report and this impact is well documented by multiple agencies<sup>1</sup>. What children do outside of the core curriculum holds huge potential for good and time spent wisely can impact on life chances, social mobility, attainment in the classroom and skills development. This is why Ofsted makes wellbeing and personal development a part of their framework and evaluates the extent to which the curriculum extends beyond the academic. Schools are expected to provide for learners’ broader development, “enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents.”<sup>2</sup>

Despite this, times have never been harder for schools to cater for pupils’ needs beyond the core curriculum. 50% of primary school leaders have reported cutting trips and outings, with 26% cutting sports and extra-curricular spend. At the same time 67% have reported the need to cut teaching assistants and 41% are having to use pupil premium to plug funding gaps<sup>3</sup>. What this boils down to is that there are fewer staff to run fewer clubs, with less funding and support.

Outside of school things are no brighter. The cost of living rose 7.9% during the 12-month period covered by this report<sup>4</sup>. Fuel prices reached such heights that 30.3% of all households are technically living in fuel poverty<sup>5</sup> while 29% of all children are living in poverty<sup>6</sup>. The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) annual survey found that the impact of this was huge. 79% of school staff say they and their colleagues increasingly have less time and capacity for other parts of their roles because of the effects of child poverty<sup>7</sup>.

On the following pages you will find our data highlighting national provision and participation with regard to learning beyond the classroom. While things are at their lowest, tightest and hardest for so many people, the value of the insights below is at its greatest. Essentially there is less time and money for schools, parents and partners to focus on learning beyond the classroom, despite its evidenced impact. The data provided below should act as a means to drive efficiency.

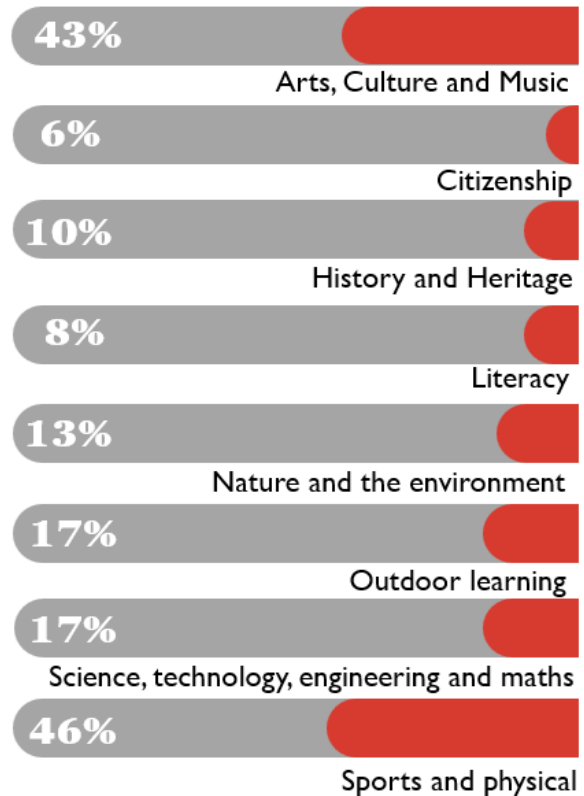
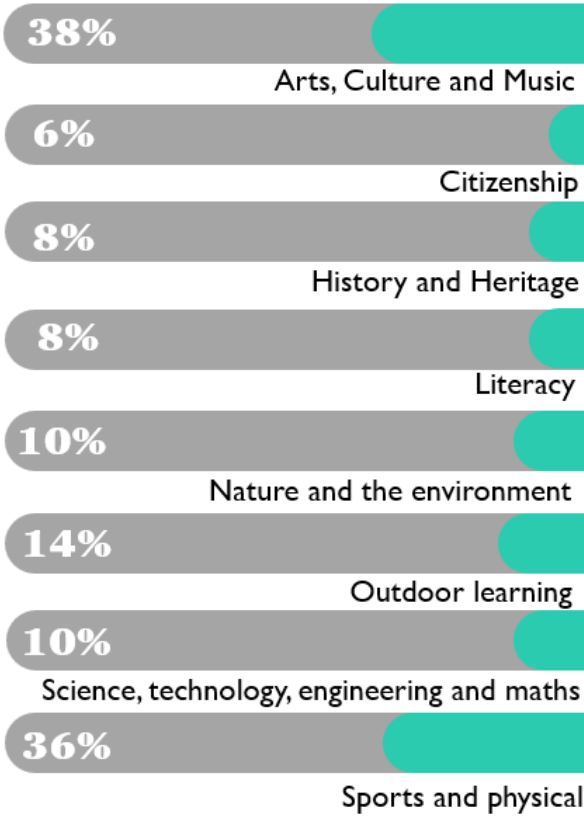
With actionable data at their fingertips, and a tool to reward a common value to disparate learning, Children’s University Online (CUO) can be used by schools to make the very most of the very little they have during these challenging times.

### Footnotes:

1. For starters and to be signposted to more view [www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/evidence](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/evidence)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-september-2023#what-inspectors-will-consider-when-making-judgements>
3. <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/school-funding-and-pupil-premium-2023/>
4. September 2022- August 2023, calculated via <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>
5. <https://www.endfuelpoverty.org.uk/about-fuel-poverty/>
6. <https://cpag.org.uk/child-poverty/child-poverty-facts-and-figures>
7. <https://cpag.org.uk/schoolsurvey>

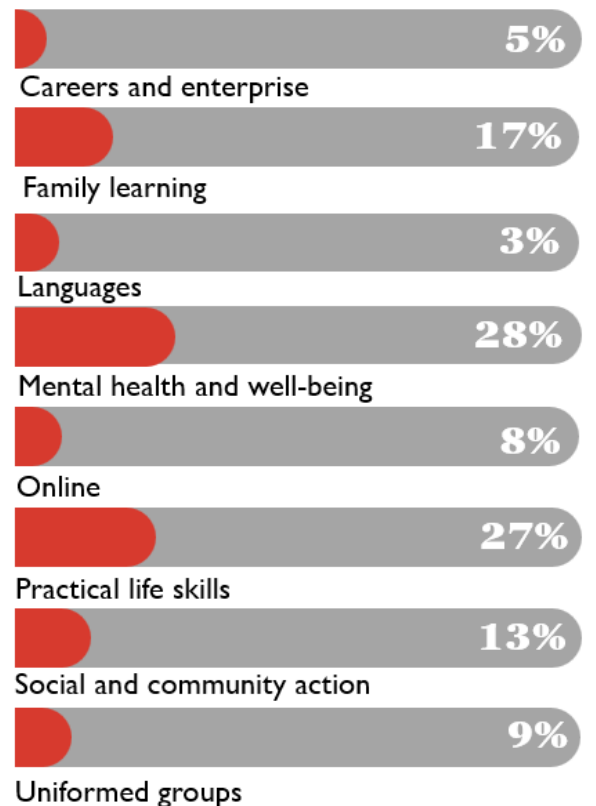
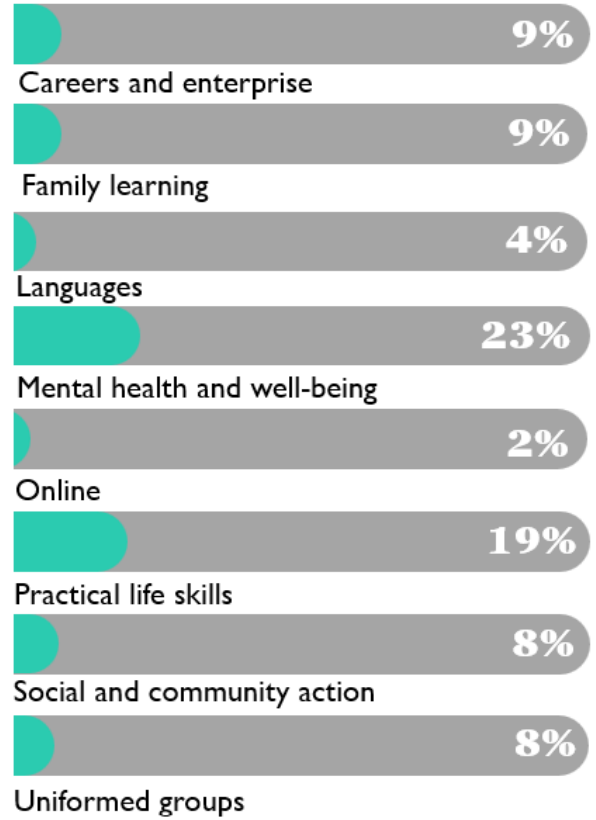
# Categorisation of activities

All validated activities on CUO are tagged with up to four thematic categories of learning. Using this data we can provide a side-by-side look at what activities are available to children (Provision) and how that compares to the activities that children have actually done in the past year (Participation). This data covers the period Sept 2022 – Aug 2023. Here we can see the percentage of activities tagged in each category.



Provision

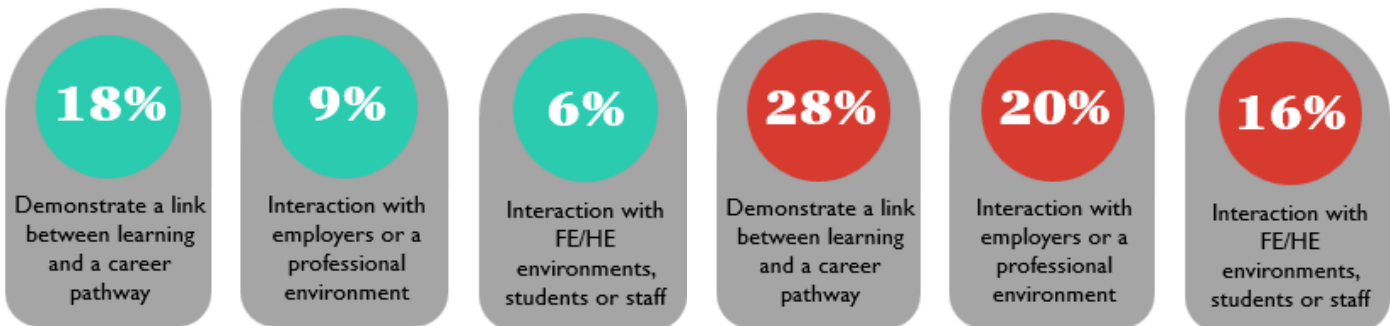
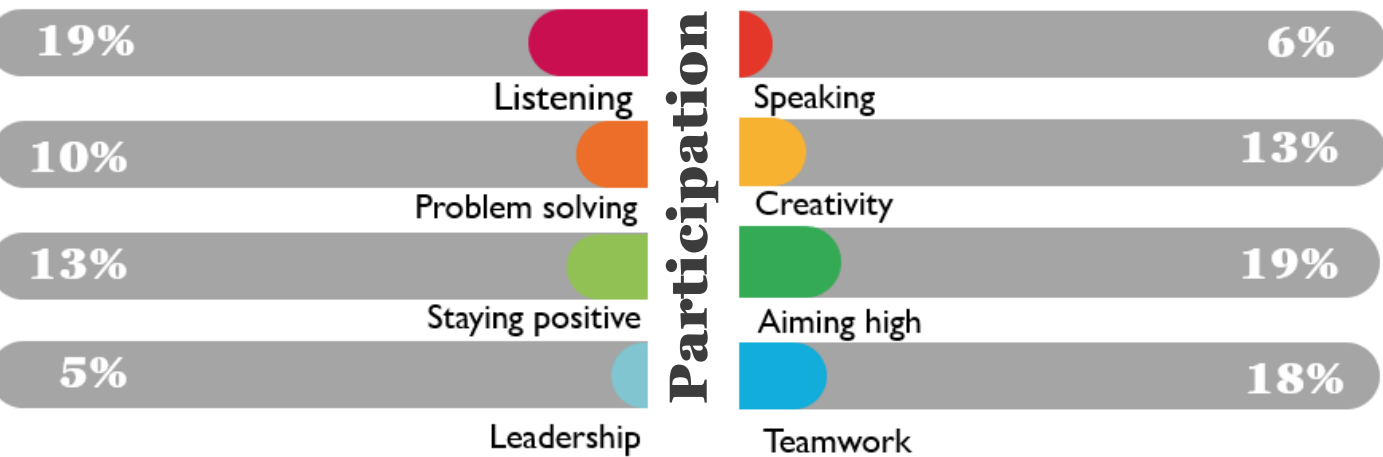
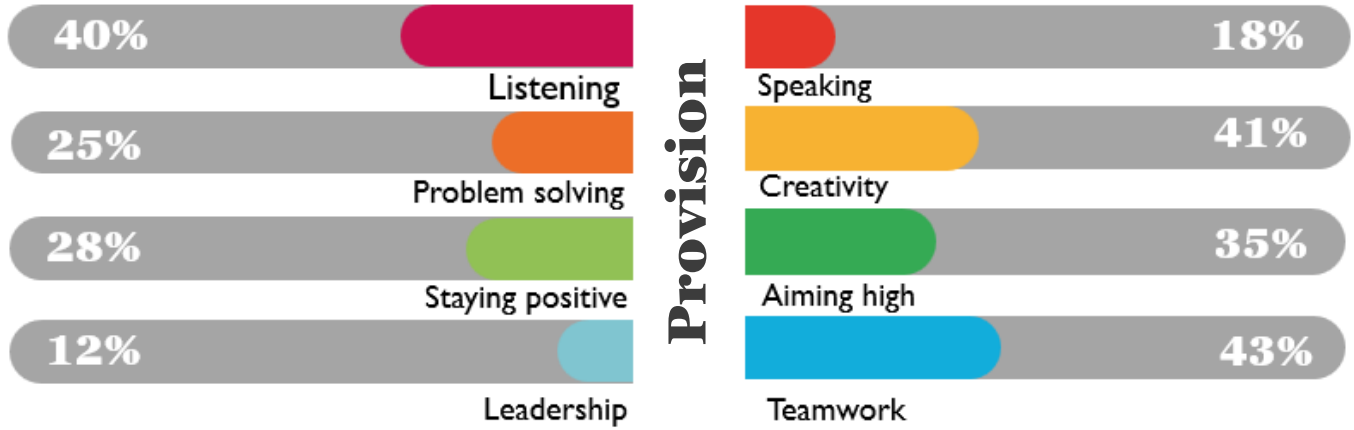
Participation





# Activities tagged by skills

Just as all activities are tagged with relevant learning categories, so too are they tagged with up to three skills, in line with the 8 essential skills of the Skills Builder framework. These tags reflect the skills that the activity providers believe best link to those that children will use and develop through participation.



## Provision

## Participation

Our activities are also tagged with engagement information in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks 4, 5, and 6 to support best practice careers guidance.

# Location and cost

Children's University validates activities from all manner of providers; from major national partners to local one-person trainers. As well as tagging with learning categories, skills, and Gatsby links, we also record whether activities are free-of-charge or costed, and whether they take place in schools or elsewhere.

## Location of activities

### Provision



53%

47%



29%

71%



### Participation

#### Our data shows that children are reliant on schools in order to engage with learning beyond the classroom

A wide variety of organisations run activities and opportunities for children beyond the classroom (53% of our validated activities take place outside of schools) yet the majority of participation (71% of it) still happens within schools.

There is huge scope to improve access to the myriad of opportunities that exist in communities and beyond schools for our children, and for external organisations to support schools in providing learning activities outside the classroom, lessening the burden on schools to provide extra-curricular enrichment led by teachers.

Since last year's report the reliance on activities taking place in schools has increased from 69% to 71%, a sign that despite the cuts to schools and the increased challenges they face, they are more relied on than ever.

There is clear evidence that schools, outside agencies, and other youth provision could do far more to support children and young people if a more joined-up approach were to be taken. Looking at the data above, for example, alongside the findings of the youth organisation, OnSide, in their recent report, *Generation Isolation: OnSide Youth Research 2023*<sup>1</sup>, we see similar stories directly from young people. Despite 89% of young people that attend a youth centre reporting that it makes a positive difference to their lives, only 9% of young people actually attend a youth centre<sup>2</sup>.

#### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.onsideyouthzones.org/generationisolation/>
2. [https://www.onsideyouthzones.org/content/uploads/2023/10/Generation-Isolation\\_Key-Findings.png](https://www.onsideyouthzones.org/content/uploads/2023/10/Generation-Isolation_Key-Findings.png)

# Cost of activities

## Provision



## Participation

**Our data shows that children are heavily reliant on free activities in order to engage with learning beyond the classroom**

Even though a significant percentage of activities available for children (61%) are free-of-charge, the cost of some activities is still a barrier. The majority of participation (77%) in learning beyond the classroom is only possible when there is no associated cost to take part. Since last year's report, we have seen free activities reduced from 68% to 61%, despite the fact that this has become a key performance indicator for Children's University Trust and extensive work has gone into new partnerships focussed on free activities with the likes of ootiboo, Twinkl, and more. We are committed to doing more.

## Parent feedback – barriers to engagement

The data above shows that the gap between participation and what is provided hinges largely on location of activities as well as the cost. To ensure a fuller picture that extends beyond simple stats, Children's University surveyed children and families about the challenges they faced in taking part in learning beyond the classroom. When asked: what are the challenges or barriers that have stopped you from taking part in some of the activities you wanted to do? the responses reinforced the findings above.



“

*I love searching the amazing activities but quite a lot of them have a cost to take part and this just isn't doable all the time, especially with two children.*

”

# Summary of findings

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- 1. If parents are to play a larger part in engaging their children in learning beyond the classroom, greater support is needed in the form of funding, subsidies, or vouchers to ensure that cost is not a barrier.**
- 2. There is huge potential for businesses and local employers to engage with schools and families by providing learning opportunities for children and young people.**
- 3. Schools need greater recognition for the role they play in enabling learning beyond the classroom. This should also translate into ringfenced funding to ensure other educational and economic challenges do not detract from their offer for pupils beyond the classroom.**
- 4. Further and Higher Education Institutions are best placed to engage with younger learners, yet engagement levels are relatively low. If life-long learning is to be encouraged, more engagement with children is needed beyond simply FE/HE recruitment programmes aimed at those post-16.**
- 5. Youth organisations need to be better supported to engage with schools and communities to ensure their impact is felt by more children and young people.**

# Want to take action or learn more?

## **Validate your activities**

If you run activities for children and young people, or you know someone who does, you can get these activities validated and added to those that Children's University signposts participants to. This is a great way to add value to your activities and reward participation. Find out more and fill out a basic online form [here](#)

## **Contact your nearest Children's University**

You can find your nearest Children's University online and contact them to find out more about the work they do locally. All Children's Universities are managed by socially-minded and community-based institutions who partner with local businesses, education providers and stakeholders of all kinds. Talk about how you could get involved and find your local contact [here](#)

## **Be a vocal ambassador for our work**

Learning beyond the classroom is key to making a life-changing difference to children and young people. Do share this report and the recommendations it contains. Children's University Trust is keen to ensure that the data we collate is shared with those who can use it to inform and improve provision for all children and young people.

## **Read more**

- To read more about provision and what is available for children and young people, you can read the National Youth Agency's (NYA) National Youth Sector Census results [here](#)
- To read more about the cost-of-living crisis and its impact on education, you can read the Child Poverty Action Group's research [here](#)

# The role that learning beyond the classroom plays in skills development



**The impact of learning beyond the classroom on the use and development of essential skills**



**Skills Builder**  
Reflecting on  
essential skills

2023-24



# The role that learning beyond the classroom plays in skills development



**“The space beyond the classroom provides the perfect opportunity for children to develop essential skills. When we enable children to build these skills and to practice and apply them in so many areas, we really set them up to thrive in the rest of their lives: better able to learn, to build strong relationships, to be resilient, and to have stronger wellbeing.**

**This report is the third State of the Nation Report from Children’s University and represents the millionth hour of learning beyond the classroom to be fully analysed through the lens of skills development. The Skills Builder Team commend the brilliant work that Children’s University are doing to make essential skills accessible for so many more children..”**

**Tom Ravenscroft  
Founder & CEO  
Skills Builder  
November 2023**



# The role that learning beyond the classroom plays in skills development

## Introduction

**“The environments and opportunities that are so rich for skills development outside of the curriculum are under threat and, therefore, so too is the level of skills and work and life readiness that young people so need to develop.”**

As the cost-of-living-crisis works hand in hand with school budget challenges, education leaders in primary and secondary schools are having to cut spending and resource on extra-curricular learning more than ever<sup>1</sup>. This is despite the fact that our data shows that children and young people are more reliant on schools to deliver learning opportunities beyond the classroom<sup>2</sup>. These cuts are having a direct impact that is already felt and, without action, will have a longstanding impact on a generation of pupils.

For the children living through these cuts, the result is a greater focus than ever on knowledge over skills, as the classroom curriculum takes greater precedence than ever on learning beyond the classroom. The environments and opportunities that are so rich for skills development outside of the curriculum are under threat and, therefore, so too is the level of skills and work and life readiness that young people so need to develop. Despite all these cuts and challenges, schools are relied on more than ever to provide.

In the most recent Education and Skills Survey from the CBI<sup>3</sup>, 94% of businesses reported having skills gaps that they needed to address. They also reported that less than 50% of businesses were confident about being able to hire to meet their needs. This gap in need and skills will only be exacerbated if we do not focus on essential skills in young people. One of the most effective and impactful ways to do this is through an investment and a focus on opportunities for learning beyond the classroom.

For the past three years, Children’s University has been very clear in evidencing that learning beyond the classroom holds huge potential for helping young people develop skills. The variety of new places, faces and spaces they can access directly relates to their development and improvement of the skills they need to be work-ready, have higher life satisfaction, and secure higher income later in life. We work closely to ensure that our evidence relates directly to Skills Builder’s industry-leading Essential Skills Framework. Together we paint a strong and hard to challenge picture of the importance of learning beyond the classroom and its role in skills development.

### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/school-funding-and-pupil-premium-2023/>
2. See p9 above
3. <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/skznxy0q/education-and-skills-survey-2022.pdf>  
p4

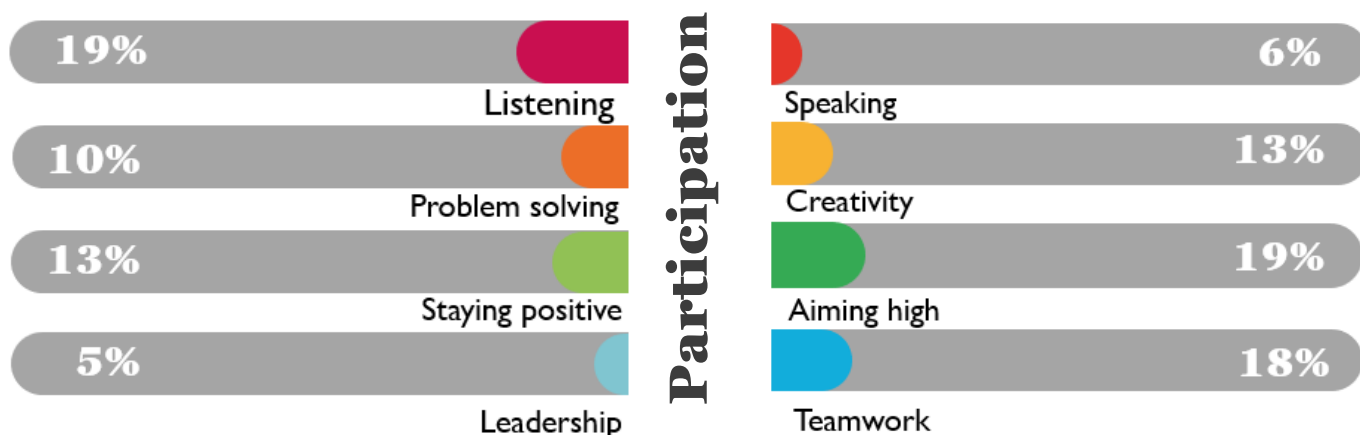


# What we know about skills and learning beyond the classroom

Looking at provision, we analysed the profile of 19,400 activities that have been quality assured and registered as part of the Children's University programme. All of these activities have been categorised and tagged with the essential skills that the learning providers believe their activities help children to develop. By reviewing the percentage of all activities that are tagged with each skill, in line with those of the Skills Builder framework, we can see how opportunities to develop each skill are tied to provision.



Looking at the same set of 19,400 activities but reviewing instead the participation levels, we can see how skills are actually used. Analysing over 704,000 hours of participation in these activities, we can see the percentage of time spent developing each skill. In this way we can see the reality of participation next to provision. For example, while 25% of activities that are available give children and young people an opportunity to develop problem solving skills, only 10% of participation is in these activities. Similarly, creativity is associated with 41% of activities available, yet only makes up 13% of participation.



**In short, more needs to be done to break down barriers and encourage participation in these activities. Providers also need to understand the links between their activities and the essential skills that will be developed through participation.**

# What children tell us

All activities (19,400) registered on Children's University Online are tagged with up to three skills by the learning provider. Between September 2022 and August 2023 children were surveyed directly about the impact that learning beyond the classroom had on their skills use and development. Based on more than 16,000 individual skills reflections, children told us:



Used the skills we said they would use

**89 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

**94 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

**53 %**

## Comparing all 8 skills

Above you can see cumulative results from children about all skills use and improvement, while below this is broken down for each of Skill's Builder's 8 essential skills.



**93 %**

**91%**

**53%**



**90 %**

**94 %**

**52 %**



**85 %**

**94%**

**51%**



**90 %**

**95 %**

**55 %**



**84 %**

**93 %**

**49 %**



**78 %**

**94 %**

**54 %**



**88 %**

**94 %**

**52 %**



**89 %**

**95 %**

**57 %**

# Skills development and age

During the 2022-23 period outlined above, we surveyed all children participating in Children's University. This is a range of ages (more on our participant profiles and ages can be found in the section below titled, 'Children's University: Our Reach') and shows a generalised picture based on 16,000+ instances of skills reflection by participants. Below you can see how this compares to past surveys looking at specific age groups.

## All ages

Surveyed 2022-23



Used the skills we said they would use

89 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

94 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

53 %

## Children aged 5-11 (Key Stage 1 & 2)

Surveyed 2021-22



They used the skills activity providers said they would use

89 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

86 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

42 %

## Children aged 11+ (Key Stage 3+)

Surveyed 2020-21



They used the skills activity providers said they would use

92 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

94 %

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

73 %

# Qualitative feedback

## “Tell us about how you used this skill? Is there anything else you want to tell us about?”

Our skills survey<sup>1</sup> results above are based on quantitative responses linked to a Likert scale. Alongside this, pupils were given the opportunity to provide free-text responses to talk about how they used skills when taking part in specific activities beyond the classroom. Below are some of the anonymised responses:

“

*“I used the skill problem solving when I came across a difficult piece of homework and I found a way to overcome it.”*

*“It’s always important to help lead a team in football. We worked hard together and encouraged each other throughout the games and training. I was able to support other members of the team.”*

*“I made up my own piece of music on the guitar which meant that I could use my creativity skills.”*

*“My weekly swimming lessons are helping me gain confidence and doing things on my own. We help each other in our lesson group if some of us struggle with something.”*

*“Me and my friend were partners and at first I didn’t want to work in a group but now I realise how important it is.”*

*“My grandad is polish, he is also helping me speak polish, so we use creativity by singing songs to help me remember the words.”*

*“We help each other to use our creativity, by encouraging each other. Helping each other to come out of our shells if we are shy.”*

*“I tried my best in Football Club and I helped score a few goals. I improved by not giving up because the other team was winning and even though we lost a few times, I was still proud.”*

*“I stayed positive and stopped worrying about secondary school”*

*“I was able to tell my family members why I loved them. It helped me think in a positive way and feel happy.”*

*“I was the youngest there so had to really listen to the more complicated instructions and watch the older children to see what to do.”*

”

### Footnotes:

1. For greater detail on methodology and the survey mechanisms, full details can be found in our initial skills report produced for Nesta: <https://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/media/1329/full-report-the-impact-of-cu-on-the-development-of-essential-skills.pdf>

# Links between learning beyond the classroom and skills in later life

**“There is a correlation between this progress we report in children and the average national adult skill level.”**

Each year Skills Builder publish their *Essential Skills Tracker*<sup>1</sup>, investigating the links between skill levels in adults and life outcomes. They report that:

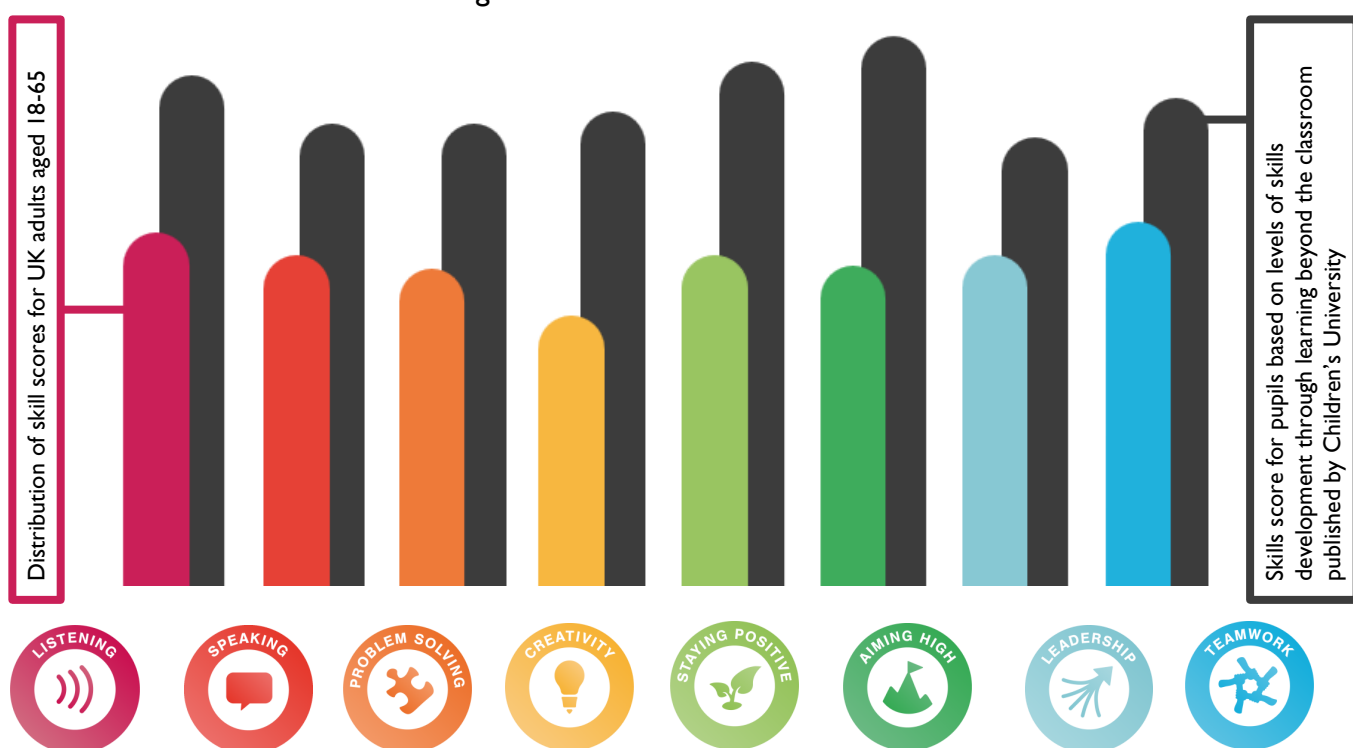
- higher levels of essential skills correlate with higher income
- higher levels of essential skills are related to higher life satisfaction
- building essential skills can increase the probability of being in work or education.

In light of this, it is important to note that the patterns we see in children and young people are mirrored in the results Skills Builder see in adults. What children do beyond the classroom has a lifelong impact.

The chart below shows the average skills score for UK adults aged 18-65 published by Skills Builder<sup>2</sup> (coloured bars) against the pupils' skills score taken from our Skills Survey above (black bars). The pupils' skill progress is the average number of individuals who reported four or five out of five on a Likert scale for their own progress. There is a correlation between the progress we report in children and the average national adult skill level. For children, listening, speaking and problem solving are proportionally equal to the UK working-age adults whereas with creativity, children score much higher than UK working-age adults. The clear implication - supported in other research - is that progress as a child leads to higher skill levels and better life outcomes.

## Footnotes:

1. <https://www.skillsbuilder.org/file/essential-skills-tracker-2023>
2. [https://assets-global.website-files.com/5ab25784c7fcbff004fa8dca/64073cd121e6c7c38ba13f49\\_Essential%20Skills%20Tracker%202023.pdf](https://assets-global.website-files.com/5ab25784c7fcbff004fa8dca/64073cd121e6c7c38ba13f49_Essential%20Skills%20Tracker%202023.pdf) Fig. 0.3 p17



# Summary of findings

- 1. Children consistently report that learning beyond the classroom has a positive impact on their skills development.**
- 2. The impact of learning beyond the classroom on skills use and improvement is reported at higher levels for older (11+) children.**
- 3. The average distribution of skills scores in adults aged 18-65 as reported by Skills Builder can broadly be seen to be mirrored in children as reported by Children's University. The opportunities available to young people as children can be seen to have a life-long impact and hold potential to shape this distribution in future generations.**
- 4. There remains a gap between the skills provision and participation levels in the activities validated by Children's University. More can be done to ensure learning providers are consistent and clear in their understanding and communication of skills outcomes for their activities.**
- 5. Speaking and problem solving remain the lowest level of the skills reported as developed by children through learning beyond the classroom. Organisations like Children's University and those working in the space beyond education can do more to focus on these skills.**



# Want to take action or learn more?

## Join the Skills Builder Partnership

The Skills Builder Partnership is a global movement of employers, educators, and impact organisations working together to ensure that one day, everyone builds the essential skills to succeed. All members are committed to using the Skills Builder approach to transform how the world builds essential skills. The Partnership is growing quickly. You can join and benefit from expert support in building and assessing essential skills in your organisation – whether you are a business, education institution or impact organisation. [Find out more.](#)

## Read more

- Read the Skills Builder Essential Skills Tracker 2023 [here](#)
- Read Children's University's Skills Impact Report 2021 to find out more about the methodology used to collate the data in this document [here](#)

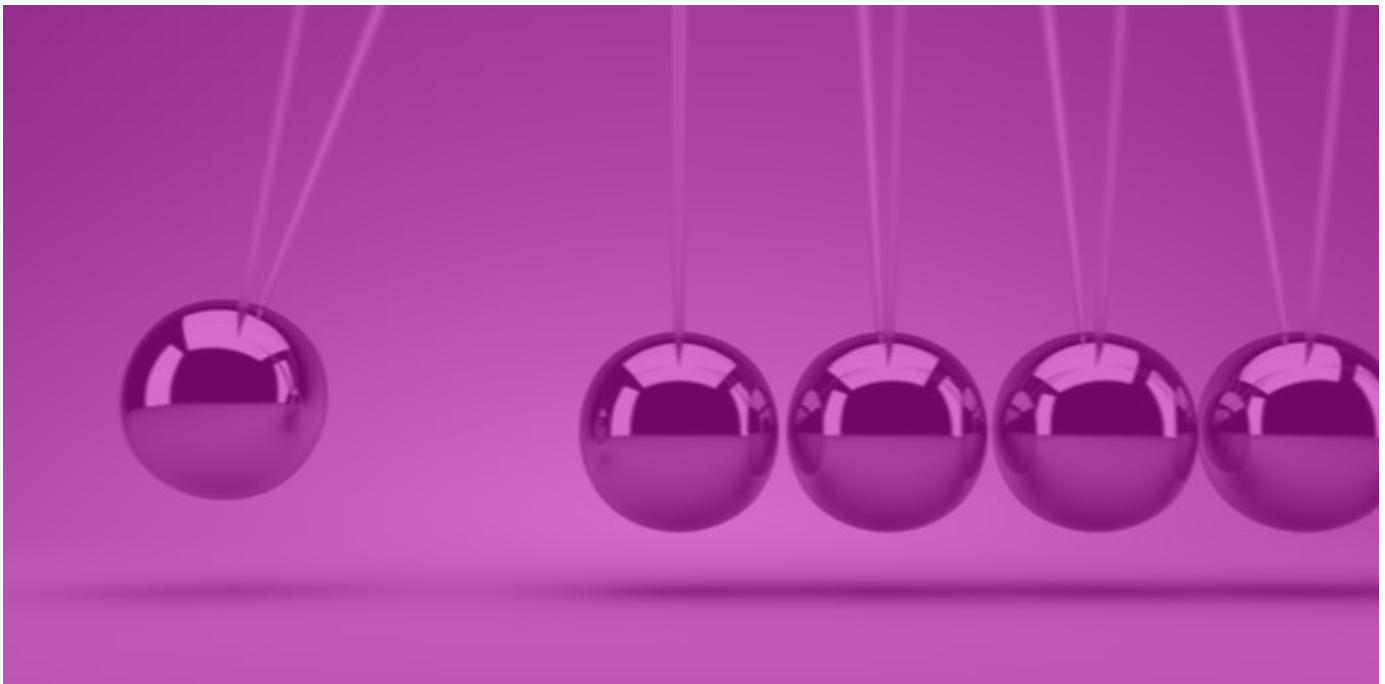


# Skills Builder

## PARTNERSHIP



# The impact of learning beyond the classroom



**A look at the wide impact that learning beyond the classroom has on children and young people**



# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

## Introduction

**“How do you measure the impact of learning beyond the classroom in all its broad glory? It’s impossible to put a figure on the interests and passions developed, or a measurement of the incremental changes and choices that are made because of engagement in activities beyond school.”**

In September 2023, Ezra Collective were announced as the first ever jazz band to win the respected Mercury Prize in over 30 years of the prize’s existence<sup>1</sup>. In his award acceptance speech<sup>2</sup>, band leader Femi Koleoso said

*“We met in a youth club. This moment... is testimony to good special people putting time and effort into young people playing music. This is... a special moment for every single organisation across the country ploughing their efforts into young people playing music.”*

Koleoso’s speech was a great moment of validation for youth organisations and those working with children and young people to see their impact recognised and championed on a contemporary and culturally important stage. Amongst the public replies on social media, alongside the congratulations of jazz fans, were messages of thanks and support from public educators, youth and wellbeing researchers, voluntary youth services, and music charities. Those working in this area know how important impact is and, conversely, how difficult it can be to measure.

For every Ezra Collective, there are countless bands who gain no recognition beyond the rehearsal room walls. Widening the scope beyond music, how do you measure the impact of learning beyond the classroom in all its broad glory? It’s impossible to put a quantitative figure on the countless interests and passions developed, or a statistical measurement of the incremental changes and choices that are made because of engagement in activities beyond school.

Yet impact and its measurement are crucial. Funding and support are so often linked to outcomes and measurable impact. Time, policies and public recognition and debate are given to initiatives that can demonstrate proven impact.

On the following pages we look at some of the contemporary evidence of the importance of learning beyond the classroom. From attainment to skills development and more.

It is, however, important to be aware of the impact that is not evidenced and the issues that do not get public debate and funding purely by the nature of their absence.

### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/ezra-collective-mercury-music-prize-winner-b2407696.html>
2. <https://twitter.com/MercuryPrize/status/1699906665976303733>

# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

**“I think a lot of issues in society that people talk about tackling, I think a lot of those answers come from occupying young people with things like youth clubs.”**

When interviewed by Channel 4 news<sup>1</sup> a few days after his band's Mercury Prize win, Koleoso was asked about cuts to youth services. He said:

*“I've been making this point for a long time, but you rarely see headlines like 'Football academy player commits this massive crime', 'Young tennis player commits this massive crime'. You know, 'Chess champion decides to do this'. You don't hear that headline very often and I have the belief that when you occupy people's minds in the direction of something positive, it takes it away from negativity. I think a lot of issues in society that people talk about tackling, I think a lot of those answers come from occupying young people with things like youth clubs.”*

In short, the success of youth services and the impact of learning beyond the classroom is often best evidenced in what is absent because of their existence. While it is encouraging to see the exploration of impact in crime prevention through initiatives such as the Youth Endowment Fund's recent open grant call<sup>2</sup> there is still a long way to go. For Children's University, we remain committed to collecting and sharing whatever data and evidence we can through our annual State of the Nation reports.

## Footnotes:

1. <https://twitter.com/Channel4News/status/1701281059546001824>
2. <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/grants/testing-for-impact/>

# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

## Learning beyond the classroom and attainment

**“Children taking part in learning beyond the classroom through Children’s University made two additional months’ progress in reading and maths compared to children in the other schools.”**

As this report is finalised, work is ongoing on an Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) evaluation of Children’s University due for publication in 2024. This follows, in 2017, the publication of an efficacy study of Children’s University<sup>1</sup>. The randomised control trial looked at the progress of more than 2,600 primary-aged pupils from 68 schools to test whether extra-curricular activities, including social action, could help to improve pupil attainment and other attitudes and skills, such as motivation, confidence and team-working. The results of the trial showed a direct link between participation in Children’s University and increased achievement in Reading and Maths in KS2 SATS. Findings included:

- Children taking part in learning beyond the classroom through Children’s University made two additional months’ progress in Reading and Maths compared to children in the other schools. For those eligible for Free School Meals, additional progress in Maths increased to three months’ progress.
- Those in Children’s University schools made small gains in ‘teamwork’ and ‘social responsibility’ compared to children in the other schools.
- Compared to pupils in the control group, those taking part in Children’s University were more likely to select professional occupations as their future aspiration, and to report higher levels of communication, empathy, self-confidence, resilience, and happiness, after the intervention.

### Footnotes:

1. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/childrens-university>
2. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/childrens-university-re-grant#:~:text=Children's%20University%20is%20listed%20as,cognitive%20outcomes%20in%20other%20schools>
3. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/childrens-university-re-grant>
4. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-2-attainment/2022-23>

The success of the trial was such that in 2018 EEF named Children’s University as one of just 18 Promising Projects<sup>2</sup>. This was followed in 2020 with the announcement of a second larger scale effectiveness trial<sup>3</sup> to see if such results would be replicated at scale. After inevitable pandemic delays, the new trial began in 2022 with over 5,000 pupils from more than 160 schools.

At present, the disadvantage gap index, as used by the government to track the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, is 3.2 – only marginally below 2022’s recording of 3.23, which was the highest it has been in 10 years. Now is surely the time to recognise that learning beyond the classroom can play a role in reducing this gap.

# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

## Learning beyond the classroom and skills

**“Learning beyond the classroom and its role in skills development is robustly evidenced.”**

With classroom education being largely the domain of knowledge, skills development is a key part of learning beyond the classroom. The breadth of non-curriculum activities for children allows extensive opportunities for the development and improvement of skills. As is documented in greater detail elsewhere in this report, learning beyond the classroom and its role in skills development is robustly evidenced.

In 2021, Children’s University, with guidance from the University of Sussex, published a report looking at skills development in children aged 11+<sup>1</sup>. With the support of Nesta’s Future Ready Fund, Children’s University built a survey mechanism into *Children’s University Online* to interrogate participants about the use of the skills that each activity is tagged with. Each skill was attached to a Likert scale running 1 – 5. 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree. The study set out to find:

- the percentage of students that used the skills we said they would.
- of those that did use the skills, what percentage of those improved?
- of those that did improve, what percentage stated 5 (i.e. Strongly Improved)?

Results (below) showed a direct link between participation in learning beyond the classroom (through Children’s University) and the use and improvement in essential skills development in line with the Skills Builder Framework. When the survey was repeated a year later on younger age groups, the results were similarly positive. 2023 results<sup>2</sup> on children of all ages show a consistent positive trend in the same way.

### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/media/1329/full-report-the-impact-of-cu-on-the-development-of-essential-skills.pdf>
2. See above in this document on p18

### Age 11+ (KS3)

They used the skills activity providers said they would use

**92 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

**94 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

**73 %**

### Age 5+ (KS1&2)

They used the skills activity providers said they would use

**89 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had improved**

**86 %**

Those that used skills, said **skills had strongly improved**

**42 %**

# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

## Children's University's Outcomes for Children

**“Our work is focused on ensuring that every child that participates in Children's University feels positively towards these outcomes.”**

As an organisation Children's University has seven strategic desired outcomes for children. All of our work is focused on ensuring that every child that participates in learning beyond the classroom through Children's University feels positively towards these seven outcomes.

During August 2023, we surveyed participants about these outcomes. 462 respondents rated their feelings based on a Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree alongside each of the seven statements. A breakdown of these results is below.

## Survey results

### “Because of Children's University...”

I think learning is fun and is something that I want to keep doing



I now think there are lots of new and different ways that I can learn



I feel confident and believe in myself



I have gained lots of different skills



I know that I can choose what I want to do in the future



I feel more prepared to face new challenges



I know that there are people who are proud of me for what I'm achieving



Strongly Disagree



Disagree



Neutral



Agree



Strongly Agree

# The impact of learning beyond the classroom

## Additional impact and evidence

**“Because learning beyond the classroom is such a broad church of additional learning, there is similarly broad impact that has been evidenced by different organisations.”**

Because learning beyond the classroom is such a broad church of additional learning, there is similarly broad impact that has been evidenced by different organisations. Looking broadly at out of school learning, NatCen and Newcastle University, with funding from The Nuffield Foundation, also published a number of reports investigating how out of school activities help children's learning<sup>1</sup>. They investigated how involvement in different types of activities varies for 5 to 11 year olds from different backgrounds and what this means for their educational achievement. Results showed that after school club attendance was associated with positive academic and social outcomes for disadvantaged children in particular. Organised physical activities were associated with higher attainment and better social, emotional and behavioural outcomes at age 11<sup>2</sup>. Looking more specifically at uniformed groups, for example, research from the University of Edinburgh in 2016 found that people who had participated in Scouting or Guiding were less likely to experience mood disorders or anxiety later in life<sup>3</sup>.

With much learning beyond the classroom taking place outside of schools, there is a huge potential for engagement with Children's University and informal learning to have a positive impact on parental engagement. The charity Learning With Parents report that of the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their better off peers, only 14% of the gap at age 11 is related to what happens at school. 49% of the gap is related to what happens at home<sup>4</sup>. Children's University is proud to record that 17% of participation through our programme is categorised as 'Family Learning'. To this end, children responding to our recent survey asking what they most enjoyed about Children's University included:

### Footnotes:

1. <https://www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/out-of-school-activities/>
2. <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/out-of-school-activities-and-the-education-gap>
3. <https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/publications/being-prepared-guide-and-scout-participation-childhood-social-pos>
4. <https://learningwithparents.com/about-us/>

*“I really enjoy doing different types of activities. Mum always asks if our activities have a Children's University code.”*

*“I love doing random tasks and then my sisters telling me that that counts towards Children's University”*

*“I liked graduating this year. I enjoyed having my family watch me wear my hat and gown.”*

*“I love that I can add the activities that I do with mummy and daddy”*

We need to ensure that all children and families have access to support to enable engagement like this.

# Summary of findings

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- 1. There is robust evidence that learning beyond the classroom has a positive impact on attainment**
- 2. Similarly, there is extensive evidence that learning beyond the classroom has a positive impact on skills development**
- 3. The impact that children self-report about their skills development through learning beyond the classroom increases as they get older**
- 4. Children directly report that engaging with learning beyond the classroom has a positive impact on confidence and preparedness for new challenges**
- 5. Children clearly enjoy participation in activities beyond the classroom and report a clear understanding of its value to them, well beyond it simply being fun**
- 6. Learning beyond the classroom holds potential for strengthening connections between families and their child's learning – more needs to be done to encourage and build on this.**

# Want to take action or learn more?

## **Get your school involved**

If you are a teacher or a parent of a child in an area with an operating Children's University, get in touch with them to find out how your school can get involved. Find your local contact [here](#)

## **Sign up your child**

If your child's school is not already part of Children's University, you can still sign up your child through our online subscription service. Visit [www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/subscribe)

## **Contact your nearest Children's University**

You can find your nearest Children's University online and contact them to find out more about the work they do locally. All Children's Universities are managed by socially-minded and community-based institutions who partner with local businesses, education providers and stakeholders of all kinds. Talk about how you could get involved and find your local contact [here](#)

## **Read more**

- Read about Children's University's evaluations with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) [here](#) and [here](#)





# Children's University: Our reach



**A look at Children's University's digital reach and growth from  
2022 to 2023**

# Introduction

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## Introduction

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**“We need to remain focused on capturing the insights and overviews of the learning environment beyond the classroom so that peers, policy makers, and educators of all stripes can call on us as the experts in our field and the holders of valuable live, and growing data sets.”**

Children’s University is all about encouraging, tracking and celebrating children’s participation in learning beyond the classroom. “Learning beyond the classroom” is the term we use to describe participation in any structured learning activity outside of the timetabled curriculum. This is inclusive of school-based enrichment and extra-curricular activities, as well as those that take place outside of schools and are run by organisations and individuals with no links to formal education.

With a long-established paper passport scheme running since 2007, participants collect stamps for taking part in any activities that contain structured learning and take place beyond the formal classroom curriculum. This makes Children’s University unique in the breadth of our remit. We work closely with schools, for example, and validate and support extra-curricular provision, but we also work beyond schools. We work with charities, museums and education providers, but also businesses, retailers and more. Similarly, we celebrate all kinds of learning and don’t limit ourselves to any one subject area or theme. We use the term ‘thematically agnostic’ to describe our catch-all approach to learning.

In short, Children’s University is about recognising that learning takes place anywhere and that learning can take any form. As this report illustrates elsewhere, the impact of this is huge and is why we are committed to sharing all we know.

## Our State of the Nation Reports

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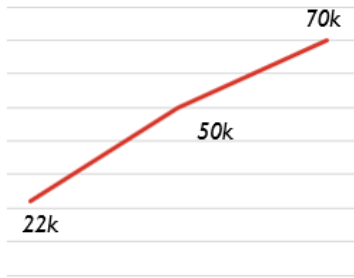
Since 2019 we have been running a bespoke online platform that works alongside our passport scheme. Children have a safe and secure place to record their participation, see their interests and skills develop, and schools and partners get an insight into the provision and participation levels in their area. Nationally Children’s University Trust publishes this report annually with the intent of informing and improving provision.

**To date our three annual State of the Nation Reports have offered an analysis and breakdown of over 1,000,000 hours of learning beyond the classroom.**

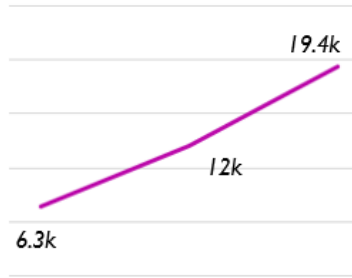
# Introduction

## Our growth

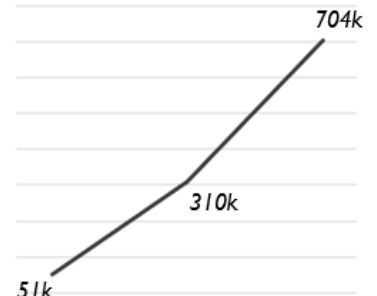
We published our first State of the Nation Report in 2021 using data from Children's University Online. Our annual growth in users, activities, and the number of hours we have recorded looks like this:



**Children registered**



**Activities available**



**Hours of learning**

With 2023 being the year that we introduced a new subscription model, allowing access to a version of our programme for children who attend a school that's not part of our network and children who are home educated, we expect to see further growth in the coming years. Children's University is now, for the first time, accessible to all children. The following pages give a greater insight into our reach and the users who generate the participation data we share.

### The State of the Nation

Evidence and impact of the importance of learning beyond the classroom in 2021



An analysis of learning beyond the classroom participation and provision using data collected between May 2019 and May 2021 by Children's University.

Written by  
Liam Nolan,  
Cordelia Howard  
with support from  
Eloise O'Donnell



### Learning Beyond the Classroom: The State of the Nation 2022

A series of evidence-based reports examining the impact and importance of learning beyond the classroom in modern Britain



An annual research project from Children's University Trust  
Written by Liam Nolan and Cordelia Howard with data analysis by Sakie Dulra



### Learning Beyond the Classroom: The State of the Nation 2023

A series of evidence-based reports examining the impact and importance of learning beyond the classroom in modern Britain



An annual research project from Children's University Trust  
Written by Liam Nolan and Cordelia Howard with data analysis by Sakie Dulra



# Headline figures

Children's University Online (CUO) gives us the opportunity to collect data that no one else is. The insights that feed into this report come from:



**70,000\* children**

There are 70,000 children with active accounts on CUO. **This is an increase of 41% from last year's report.**



**1,002 schools**

There are 1,002 schools registered on CUO.



**19,400 activities**

There are 19,400 activities currently validated and available for children on CUO. **This is an increase of 59% from last year's report.**



**704,000 hours\*\***

In the past year children have registered 704,000 hours of learning beyond the classroom. **This is an increase of 127% from last year's report.**

\* Online account numbers accurate as of September 2023. In addition to these online users, we have participants not registered online

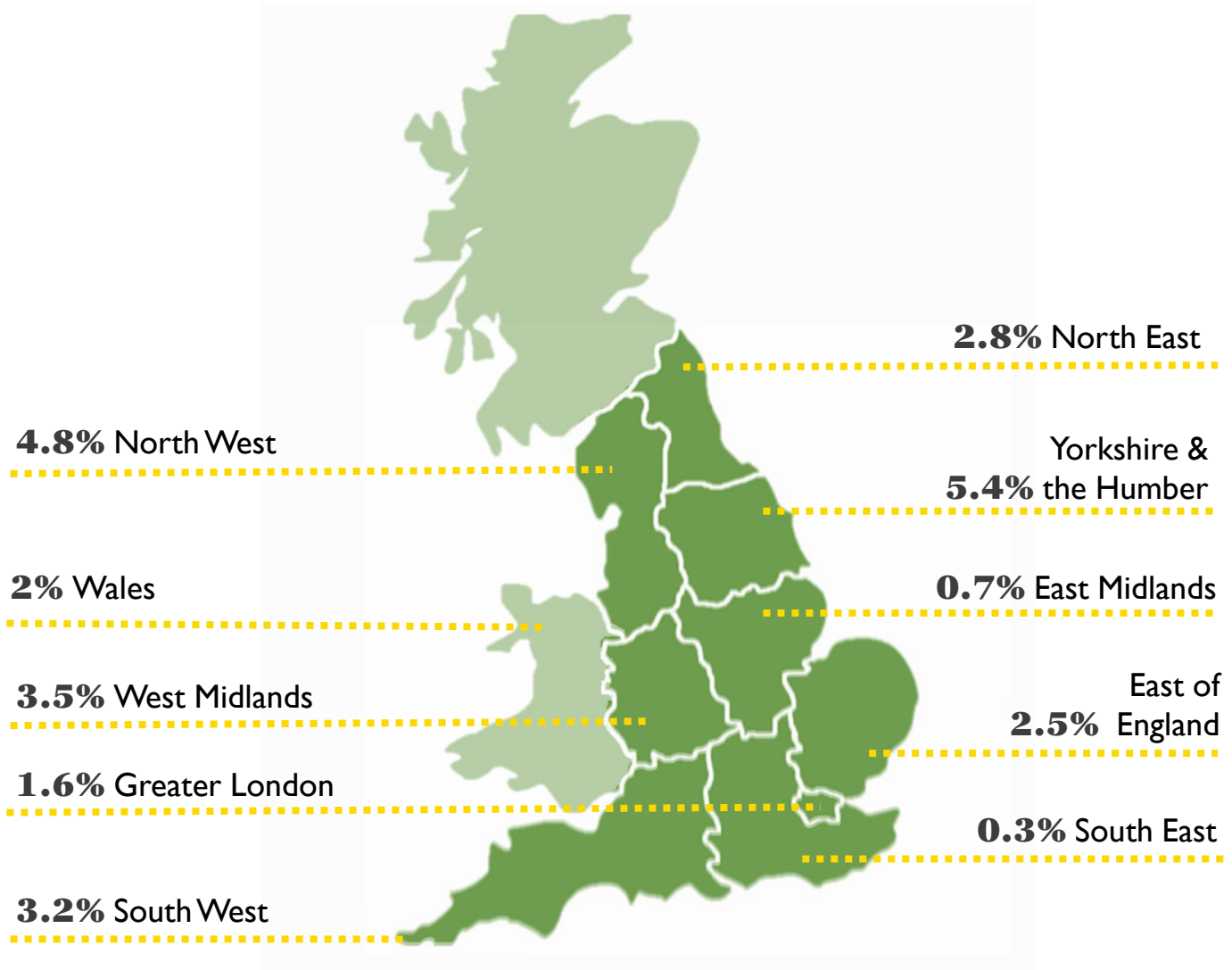
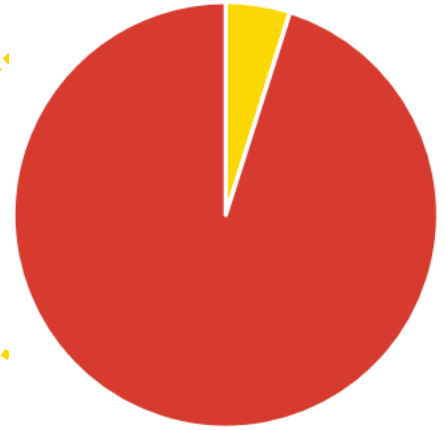
\*\* Total hours recorded online accurate as of September 2023. In addition to these online hours, our partners not currently using CUO have recorded hours not eligible for full analysis in this report. Our aim is for all of our network of partners to use CUO.

# Children's University and our reach

**In 2022-23 we had 69 partners running Children's University in 79 Local Education Authority Areas\***

**We worked in 1,002 schools. This is only 4.9% of the state primary and secondary schools in Britain**

**As a percentage of schools, our reach into the different regions is as follows:**



This is Children's University's presence in each region as a percentage of the total of state primary and secondary schools in the region.

\* Our LEA reach is down from last year's figure (96). Funding reductions have resulted in the closure of several of our local delivery partners.

# Reaching those who need us

**We focus our work where it is needed most. The areas in which we work are often those with unique challenges.**

## **Our presence in English Local Education Authorities (LEAs) with a high proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (FSM)**

We have a presence in 42% of the top 20% of LEAs where the primary school FSM rates are highest



We have a presence in 38% of the top 10% of LEAs where the primary school FSM rates are highest



We have a presence in 16% of the top 20% of LEAs where the secondary school FSM rates are highest



We have a presence in 6% of the top 10% of LEAs where the secondary school FSM rates are highest



## **We have a presence in 31% of the lowest scoring 10% of LEAs on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)**

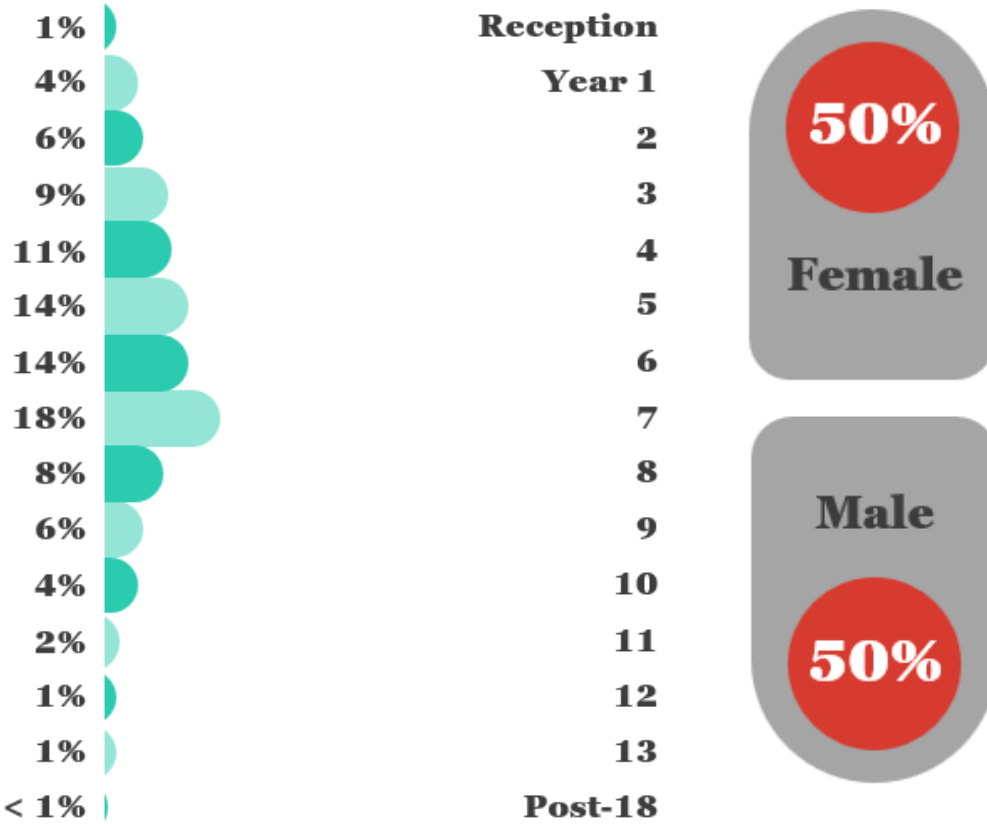


## **We operate in 10 out of the 12 Opportunity Areas as well as 78% of the Government's new Levelling Up Areas**



# Our participants

70,000 children from 1,002 schools have user accounts on CUO. This is what we know about them.

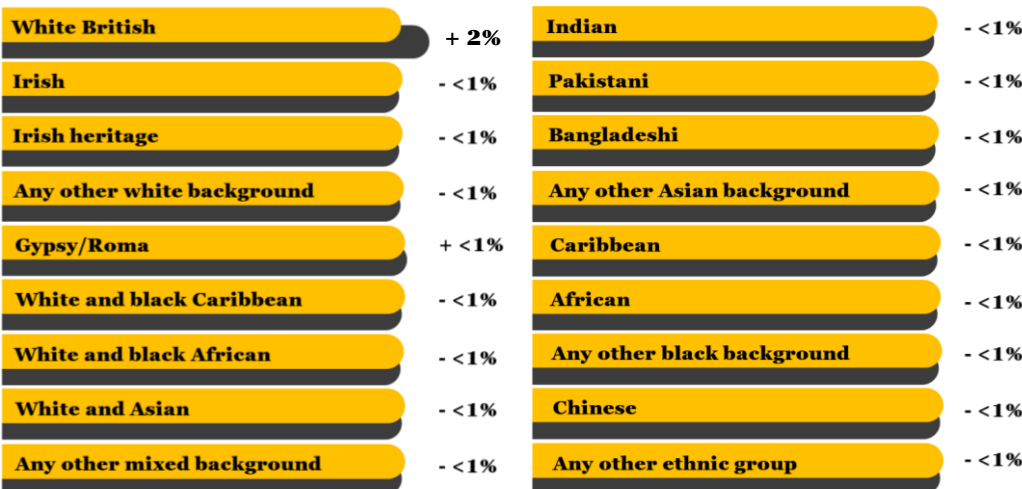


## Age and Gender

All schools that register pupils with accounts on *Children's University Online* are able to record the gender of their participants. Not all of them choose to. For the pupils we have gender data for, we have a 50-50 male-female split.



## Participant profiles extrapolated from school-level data



## Ethnicity

We do not directly collect data on Free School Meal eligibility or ethnic background of participants. However looking at public DfE data, we can see at a school level the variances between Children's University participant levels compared to national averages.

**Free School Meals**

**+ 0.7**

# How participants feel about Children's University

**“Childrens University means that all my extra work has counted for something bigger.”**

During August 2023, we surveyed participants about Children's University. 462 respondents shared their views. As well as the questions that informed our 'Outcomes for Children' survey (see the results in the above section, The Impact of Learning Beyond the Classroom) we asked participants to respond to the question: **“What's been your favourite thing about Children's University this past year? A mixed selection of their responses is below:**

“

## **My favourite thing about Children's University?**

*“That all different kinds of learning can be appreciated.”*

*“The fact that I got my gold award. I felt very proud.”*

*“Knowing I'm learning all the time.”*

*“Getting recognition for the work I do and feeling proud.”*

*“Trying something I thought I wouldn't like. Just like drama and doing the high ropes on holiday.”*

*“My favourite thing is being able to log activities like kayaking and keeping a record of them.”*

*“I enjoyed getting stamps and building them up to get my bronze and silver. I liked filling in about 'my favourite things'.”*

*“I loved realising that all my fun is also learning!”*

*“[Children's University] helped me realise that I'm not doing it just for me I'm doing it for everyone”*

*“Learning new skills and checking progress.”*

*“Earning the points and feeling like a grown up at university.”*

**“It's inclusive. There is nothing too big or too small to add. Everything is a possibility to earn credits.”**

”



# Summary of findings

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- 1. Usage of Children's University Online is rapidly increasing. As user numbers grow, so too does the robustness and value of our data on learning beyond the classroom.**
- 2. No one else is collecting the data that we are, as broadly and across such a spectrum of learning.**
- 3. Children's University's reach across the country is significant, but there is still a long way to go in order to best collate data for all educators and local areas.**
- 4. Children's University's presence is greatest in areas where its impact is needed most.**
- 5. Participation in Children's University remains predominantly in primary-aged settings. For the impact to grow, greater reach into secondary schools is key. We will be doing this through a pilot secondary rebrand called The Etc Programme.**

# Want to take action or learn more?

## **Get your school involved**

If you are a teacher or a parent of a child in an area with an operating Children's University, get in touch with them to find out how your school can get involved. Find your local contact [here](#)

## **Sign up your child**

If your child's school is not already part of Children's University, you can still sign up your child through our online subscription service. Visit [www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/subscribe)

## **Contact your nearest Children's University**

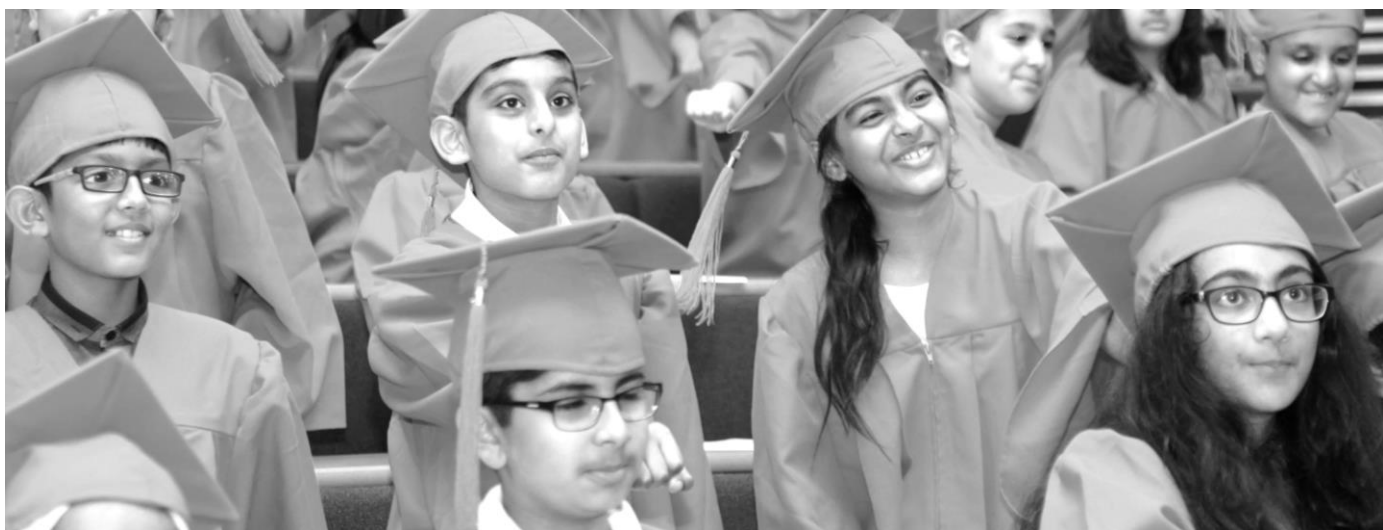
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## **Validate your activities**

If you run activities for children and young people, or you know someone who does, you can get these activities validated and added to those that Children's University signposts participants to. This is a great way to add value to your activities and reward participation. Find out more and fill out a basic online form [here](#)

## **Read more**

- Read more about *Children's University Online (CUO)*, the bespoke digital platform built to add value for all stake holders engaged with learning beyond the classroom. It is the user data from this platform that informs this report. Read more [here](#)



# **Learning beyond the classroom: links and recommendations for policy makers**



.....

**A case for increased support and recognition of learning beyond  
the classroom in British education**

.....

# Learning beyond the classroom: links and recommendations for policy makers



## **Learning beyond the classroom can have a life-changing impact on those who are able to participate.**

With children only spending 9% of their waking life within a classroom by the time they turn 18,<sup>1</sup> the significance and potential of the time beyond the formal curriculum is huge. Robust evidence shows that time well spent outside the classroom can impact on skills development, attainment, social mobility and life chances. It should go without saying, therefore, that learning beyond the classroom is deserving of a greater focus from educators and policymakers.

What Children's University's State of the Nation Reports show is that Children's University as a programmatic intervention is one that has a positive impact. The evidence above illustrates this and reinforces the evidence that others have also reported. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), The University of Sussex, and our own evaluations and data analysis back this up.

However, this report should not be read as a self-congratulatory celebration of impact. It is a call to action to policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders to work with us to harness and scale the impact we know that this kind of learning can have. Yes, Children's University is an impactful programme, but where Children's University really holds potential, is when it is adopted and embedded in a local setting with coordinated and engaged stakeholders. When Local Authorities, Higher Education Institutions, and other stakeholders work to build a coordinated ecosystem of opportunities through Children's University, the change becomes systemic on a local level.

## **Programmatic interventions help people beat the odds. Systemic interventions can help change their odds.<sup>2</sup>**

We write these reports, collect this data, and share our learning so that we can see the change we make scale and grow. We do not simply want to see Children's University grow as a programme, but instead want to see learning beyond the classroom recognised, supported and funded as an impactful systemic addition to education policy. To this end, we make the recommendations overleaf.

### **Footnotes:**

1. <https://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/media/1151/percentage-of-time-outside-the-classroom.pdf>
2. Karen Pittman, CEO of the Forum on Youth Investment, at Tamarack's Community Change Institute in Vancouver in 2015 <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/evaluating-systems-change-results-inquiry-framework>

# Learning beyond the classroom: links and recommendations for policy makers

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## We recommend:

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1. Greater funding for schools that should be ringfenced for learning beyond the classroom. Schools should not have to cut spending on extra-curricular activities in order to cover costs elsewhere.
2. Greater cross-department government policy bringing together the Department for Education, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This coordination could:
  - create more place-based partnerships between schools and external learning providers (the likes of which we are encouraged to see trialled by funding through NCS and the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards' Enrichment Partnerships Pilot)
  - target and prioritise learning beyond the classroom partnerships in Levelling Up Education Investment Areas where we know their impact will be greatest
  - encourage existing successful place-based partnerships to expand into neighbouring places – using the tried and tested rather than reinventing the wheel (such as the development of South Yorkshire Children's University expanding out of Sheffield)
3. Funding to be made available for young people and families to access learning opportunities beyond the classroom. If parents are to play a larger part in engaging their children in learning beyond the classroom, greater support is needed in the form of funding, subsidies, or vouchers to ensure that cost is not a barrier.
4. Incentives for businesses and employers to work with local schools and education partners.
5. Greater recognition and support for youth organisations to make meaningful links and connections with schools and other providers of opportunities.

# Learning beyond the classroom: links and recommendations for policy makers

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**As the leading organisation working in the learning space beyond the classroom, we commit to:**

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1. Continuing to share these State of the Nation Reports across government (the DfE and DCMS, as well as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) and for the benefit of peer organisations
2. Continuing to support and grow our network of place-based delivery partners who are looking to make systemic change in their locale
3. Continuing to work with non-governmental organisations and associations (Skills Builder, Fair Education Alliance (FEA), Foundation for Education Development (FED) and others) to ensure our insights and data is able to support their wider work linked to learning beyond the classroom.



# Thanks

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Children's University Trust introduced CUO as a tool to support our network and to gather data to inform reports such as these. Without the patience and understanding of our network of partners as they faced the introduction of new ways of working and the various teething problems inherent in any new digital project, this report would not be possible. Thank you to all existing and former Children's University Managers who contributed in some way.

Thanks to Big Change, EEF, Nesta, SHINE, Garfield Weston Foundation, The Goldsmiths Company Charity and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for funding work that has helped us evidence our impact so robustly. Your insight and faith in us as an organisation are as important to us as your generous financial support.

Thank you to the schools, children and parents who have joined us on our digital journey and whose engagement with learning beyond the classroom has supported our evidence base as well as being fun and rewarding in and of itself.

Thank you to [The Tech Dept](#) for being understanding, talented and patient digital partners in the build, maintenance and ongoing development of CUO.

Thanks to you for reading this. Should you still be here reading this final page, you are almost certainly engaged enough with the same issues as us to play a part in joining our movement. Do get in touch.

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## Now join the conversation online



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[#CUStateoftheNation](#)



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