# Supplementary Material File 11 External stakeholder interview guide

**Introduction**

*Thank you for taking part in the interview today. We would like to talk today about the current children’s physical activity intervention landscape. We have recently concluded a research trial in secondary schools called PLAN-A which aimed to increase physical activity levels of 13-14-year-old girls using a peer influence approach. This was a peer-led programme in which influential pupils were trained to encourage their peers to be active. The programme showed promise in a feasibility study but in a large randomised controlled trial we found that there was no difference in the physical activity levels of girls who received the intervention and girls who did not. We are interested to explore what alternate approaches may work in school and community settings and how the research community can support this.*

*This interview will broadly consider the following themes:*

1. *If interventions that focus on individual educational approaches to increasing physical activity don’t work, what will?*
2. *How could we encourage schools to adopt different approaches to increase physical activity?* 
   1. *What might work?*
   2. *What would make this more difficult*
3. *COVID-19 considerations, and how might this apply in non-COVID contexts*

Participants will then be told about the confidentiality procedures using the following script.

*Before we get started, I’d like to tell you that I will be taping the conversation. The recording is to help us remember what you said. You can ask for the tape to be stopped at any time. After we have written a report about all the opinions we have heard here and with other participants, the tapes and notes will be destroyed, so none of the information that is written down and recorded can be connected to you in any way. This means that any identifying names and phrases will be coded/anonymised in the transcripts and reports*.

*Are you happy for the conversation to be recorded?*

**Yes?** Proceed to interview

**No?** Thank participant for time and end the interview

**Background on PLAN-A**

Explain PLAN-A further if needed and answer any participant questions.

**Stakeholder context**

1. Could you briefly describe your role and how you are involved with physical activity promotion in children?
   1. Do you have any direct influence over initiatives or policy? Please expand.

**Intervention models**

*The school setting is an obvious choice to deliver interventions to change physical activity in young people because you can reach lots of children at once, and they spend lots of time in school. However, increasingly, research trials show that interventions targeting individuals’ physical activity behaviour (such as PLAN-A and others) can show promise in pilot stages but have limited effectiveness when scaled up in a full trial - perhaps we need to rethink the model of delivery.*

1. What do you think are the main factors that affect the **effectiveness** of programmes aiming to change physical activity levels of young people in school settings during curriculum time?
   1. What about outside of the formal curriculum but still at school?
   2. Are similar factors influential in other contexts/interventions?
      1. Contexts e.g. community, primary schools/Further education
      2. Interventions e.g. numeracy/literacy, bridging pupil inequalities

PROMPTS (from Beets et al., 2020):

* Dose and intensity of the intervention
* Who is delivering the intervention
* Support within the schools

1. An alternative to the use of targeted individual level interventions are broader, multi-faceted whole-school approaches where, for example, physical activity promotion and opportunities are woven into school life.
   1. Do you have any experience of/thoughts about this approach?
   2. How do you think this approach would compare to the traditional approach targeting groups of individuals?
   3. What would/do schools think of this approach?
   4. What would be the challenges in delivering something like this?
   5. How would it differ for primary vs secondary school?
   6. How could inequalities be addressed using a whole-school or systems approach (for example gender, or SES)?
2. Where should the leadership on this kind of approach come from and why?
   1. Is it local authorities adopting this kind of model, academy bosses, school heads?
   2. Think about who supports and helps the schools implement such programmes.

**[COVID-19 context]**

1. How would the current public health crisis affect the effectiveness of such programmes if they were to be rolled out now?
   1. What would work better in a post-COVID environment, and why?

**Research implications**

Thinking about the above…

From our perspective, as researchers, what do you think you need from us, in terms of helping to develop, implement or evaluate physical activity programmes?

How do you use research?

What kind of research do you use?

How do you find the research which informs your thinking?

1. What level of evidence are you looking for to help inform your thinking, planning, and case for funding?
   1. No evidence needed – just ideas
   2. In-house evaluation work of initiatives is enough
   3. You prefer to use robust “research” evidence
      1. Research evidence can come from longitudinal research, cross-sectional or even anecdotal sources. Each have strengths, but longitudinal research can tell us the most about cause and effect.
2. Who are the key stakeholders to engage with during the research design phase to ensure it is most useful?

**Exit script**

* Is there anything else you’d like to say about the things we talked about today?
* Do you have any questions for me?
* We appreciate you sharing your thoughts and opinions with us.