

# **StreetChance** Evaluation

## Year 3 Report

## Impact Summary

Alex Channon  
Joanne Hill  
Ruth Jeanes

Institute of Youth Sport  
School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences  
Loughborough University

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This impact summary is derived from the Year 3 Evaluation Report of StreetChance. The Year 1 Evaluation Report was undertaken mid-way through the first year of operations. This is the third year that the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University have undertaken an independent evaluation of StreetChance as part of their Chance to Shine Evaluation, and covers the second year of StreetChance Operations in its entirety.

## **Year 3 StreetChance Impact Summary**

### **1. Introduction**

#### *1.1 Background to the StreetChance Project*

In May 2008 the Cricket Foundation commissioned the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University to evaluate the delivery of their 'StreetChance' programme. The StreetChance initiative was devised as a special project within the broader 'Chance to Shine' scheme, which has been delivering cricket coaching to schools across the UK since May 2005. Deliberately targeting inner-city areas where children's access to cricket clubs is limited, the StreetChance programme is focussed on the promotion and development of cricket in these relatively deprived areas, and also on using cricket to engage with 'at risk' and under-privileged young people. The specific aims of StreetChance in its third year of operation are summarised below.

#### *1.2 The Programme's Aims*

Aims for the programme within schools include:

- 1) Increased PE participation, particularly among marginalised pupils;
- 2) Increased attendance rates within schools, particularly among marginalised pupils;
- 3) Increased performance in literacy, communication and teamwork amongst all participants but particularly pupils who use English as a second language;
- 4) Increased performance in numeracy skills amongst all pupils but particularly among marginalised pupils;
- 5) Improved teacher confidence to use the skills learned from StreetChance to teach cricket within the national curriculum.

Aims for the programme within community-based projects include:

- 6) To provide a diversionary activity that tackles and prevents youth crime and anti-social behaviour in selected areas in London;
- 7) Break down barriers between diverse communities which have previously struggled to integrate (gangs, ethnic groups, religious groups) and aid community cohesion;
- 8) Opportunities for the police to interact with groups and individuals in their schools and local area, to learn about the issues affecting young people and develop positive and constructive relationships with them;
- 9) Sustained involvement in cricket activity as a meaningful diversion through ongoing participation;
- 10) Positive outcomes for young people involved in the programme, with participation leading to training, volunteering or secured employment;

- 11) To engage young people, including vulnerable and at risk teenagers, to develop an understanding of the choices facing them, relationships with other young people, the police and the wider community.

### 1.3 *The Programme's Initiatives*

In order to meet these numerous objectives, the StreetChance programme has run school-based and community-based cricket sessions, as well as organised several inter-borough tournaments for both school and community clubs, at specifically-targeted sites in the Greater London area. This year has also seen the introduction of girls-only school and community sessions, as improving participation rates among girls was considered a priority this year. Another addition to this year's programme is the 'Peace at the Crease' initiative, which involves community support police officers from the Metropolitan Police attending and taking part in a number of the community-based sessions in order to more directly address the objective of improving police relationships with the targeted young people. One additional branch of the programme is the Apprenticeships scheme, which provides enthusiastic young people involved in StreetChance the opportunity to work towards becoming cricket coaches themselves.

## **2. Evaluation Methodology**

### *2.1 Methodology*

The evaluation team have utilised a case study approach in order to undertake an in-depth and detailed analysis of programme delivery in several London boroughs. The evaluation of the main StreetChance programme delivery has focussed on two boroughs where youth crime and anti-social behaviour are particularly prevalent. Within each of these boroughs, one primary school and one secondary school were selected to take part in the research. For the girls' programme, two secondary schools from different boroughs were selected. Within each of these schools, the coaches and teachers were interviewed and a small number of young people who had participated in the programme were interviewed in a focus group. The evaluation team also observed coaches delivering sessions in some of the schools, although given time constraints this was not always possible. For the Peace at the Crease initiative, two different community-based sessions were visited and police representatives as well as coaches and several young people participating were interviewed. To gain an appreciation of the Apprenticeships scheme, four young people who have been involved in the scheme were interviewed.

### *2.2 Report Structure*

Following visits to the schools and community sites, transcripts of each interview and focus group were produced and analysed. The main findings from these analyses form the body of this report, which evaluates the various initiatives of the StreetChance programme in line with the 11 objectives outlined above.

### **3. StreetChance in Schools: Objectives 1-5**

#### **3.1 *Increased PE Participation, Particularly Among Marginalised Pupils***

##### **3.1.1 *Provision of Cricket***

Our impression is that the StreetChance programme has succeeded in improving the quality and quantity of cricket provision across the board in the participating schools. Whether provision has occurred during school hours as part of PE lessons, or during lunchtime or after-school clubs, the coaches have all been received very well by the children and the PE teachers are all very keen on having the expert help they provide. StreetChance has brought cricket to young people who had never played the sport previously, in areas where football usually dominates. It is clear that coaches are introducing young people to a sport that they are able to play away from the sessions – for example, in their gardens and parks with friends in their free time. Some coaches expressed that it is difficult to interest some young people in cricket because it is a ‘technical game’ and ‘they more want to play than learn, which is not necessarily a bad thing’. While taking time to teach skills and drills, the coaches all reported that the children largely prefer to go straight into playing games. As such, coaches have used standard modified versions of cricket (pairs cricket, diamond cricket, etc) along with improvised games in order to engage and hold children’s interest. It is generally felt that these games are a good way for children to develop transferrable skills (throwing, catching, striking, and so on), which enhances the potential of StreetChance coaching to contribute to the National Curriculum requirements for PE.

However, despite all appreciating the provision of expert coaches, in some instances teachers felt that the delivery might have occasionally been too heavily oriented towards games and the children could have benefitted from more dedicated skills sessions. The difference between coaching and teaching was here highlighted, as some teachers suggested that children could benefit from a more diversified programme of delivery:

“It’s almost like they just jumped straight into games. I know that’s the point of street cricket, to be fun and accessible but... it’s almost like running before you can walk, perhaps.” (High School Teacher)

Nevertheless, presenting cricket as an enjoyable, competitive, fast-paced sport was felt to be a necessary and even fruitful way of introducing cricket into the schools, giving it a positive and exciting image:

“Street cricket is a great way to bring cricket to the youngsters because they might have just seen it on TV and been bored by the test match format... I make sure they get the proper skills they need but you can’t expect them to focus if things move too slowly, so the street cricket game is a good way to keep it fun and keep it moving.” (High School Coach)

Thus, it is evident that in the provision of cricket, coaches must balance out the delivery of core skills with maintaining a fun, exciting atmosphere. The pupils all

thought that the coaches managed to achieve this, as they reported having become much better at cricket at the same time as having enjoyed the provision:

“You don’t even realise you’re learning.” (Year 8 Girl)

Overall, it was widely recognised that the programme has accomplished much in terms of bringing the sport in, raising the sport’s profile, and developing children’s cricketing talent. While most teachers have been keen to engage with the coaches and many reported that they were looking to develop their own ability to deliver cricket in schools, it was felt by most teachers and coaches alike that without the programme the provision of cricket would suffer, particularly in the primary schools. One coach even stated that:

“I can categorically say that without the programme there wouldn’t be any cricket in these schools at all.” (Primary School Coach)

### 3.1.2 *Children’s Enthusiasm for Cricket and PE*

Children have been enthused to play cricket primarily because it is seen as a fun, alternative activity to the routine sports done in PE every year.

“When you’re playing cricket you really get into it. Cricket, hitting the ball, and bowling, that’s good. It’s good because it makes you happy, cricket does.” (Year 8 Boy)

Coaches and teachers both report that the pupils who were engaged by the programme quickly developed a deep enthusiasm for the game:

“The teachers tell me that after the lesson the children just can’t stop talking about cricket and when they’ll get to do it again, at the end of the programme they’re upset and want to do it again.” (Primary School Coach)

“The ones who’ve really taken to it, well they eat, sleep and breathe cricket. If you could let them do it twelve hours a day they’d be the happiest kids in the world, they love cricket.” (High School Teacher)

Key to the children’s enjoyment is the fact that cricket is being delivered by an external coach, whose persona and presence is often quite different to that of a normal PE teacher, allowing pupils to relate to them in a more relaxed and friendly manner. Feedback from pupils and teachers regarding coaches’ engagement and rapport with pupils has been universally positive, with the children holding the coaches in high regard and often comparing them favourably to their regular PE teachers.

“It’s like a serious game when [the coach] is there. Like, come on, we really want to win this point now.” (Year 8 Boy)

We feel that the quality of the StreetChance coaches themselves (particularly their ability to communicate with and relate to the pupils) has been a vital component of the programme's success, having made cricket accessible and enjoyable to children who otherwise would not have had any contact with the sport:

"They enjoy it thoroughly... as the teachers have been telling me the kids keep talking about it after it's finished, asking for me by name until I come back in, so I think it's had a big impact." (Secondary School Coach)

"The coach is great, he really is. I'd have him here every day if I could, the kids love it." (Primary School Teacher)

### 3.1.3 *Engaging Marginalised Pupils*

Many children commented on the fact that they enjoy having a variety of sporting activities in school, and it is our distinct impression that offering a diverse PE curriculum is a very effective way of engaging marginalised pupils within school sport. Several teachers described the introduction of a new sport as being beneficial to the confidence of pupils whose ability in other sports was lacking, and who were considered to be 'not sporty' by others' standards. Given its novelty, and relative complexity compared to football, athletics, etc, cricket was considered to be an ability-levelling game which allows for all children to compete on a relatively equal footing:

"Quite often with our lower ability students, they're already at a disadvantage going into the lessons with other sports like football, which the other students have played lots of. But cricket, especially in this area, it's a bit of a leveller because no-one's really done it before, so the more able students don't have that usual advantage and the others can come through." (High School Teacher)

As such, pupils who were lacking in confidence within sports previously had the opportunity to succeed within a new context:

"One of the girls, she's a very shy girl, gets picked on a bit, not at all sporty before, and this is something that she really excelled in, I'm very happy for her... she's really good and puts the others in the shade, she's really happy. She's really come into her own with cricket." (Primary School Teacher)

"These lads were probably of the lowest ability range, and through cricket they've gone from being very much below average to being the best, and that's been massively beneficial for their confidence, and you can see that transferring to the other sports they do, and they've had recognition in assemblies and things like that. They've gained loads from it to be honest." (High School Teacher)

The fact that cricket is a new sport to most children, and one within which pupils who were not as talented as their peers in other sports could achieve, means that children who are otherwise being left behind in school sports are being enfranchised and given the opportunity to engage in a sporting career. This opens up to them such benefits as getting more regular physical activity, socialising with teammates, earning respect from their peers for whom sporting ability is particularly valued, and being able to attend tournament events and represent their schools in other competitions – a ‘chance to shine’, as it were:

“I think friendship as well, I think some of them in Year 7 can be quite shy, but they can meet girls from other classes and they’ve been on the trip together and stuff and so I think they’ve got more friends out of it, built some relationships.” (High School Teacher)

Both young people and teachers recognised that the sport of cricket itself is particularly valuable for welcoming and encouraging activity and participation among a diverse range of pupils compared to other sports, since it doesn’t require a great deal of fitness or a particular body shape or size, and can be readily adapted to suit all ability and experience ranges.

“I think the skills required in football, for example, are a lot more complex...in cricket you just hit the ball and run, so it can be picked up easier.” (Primary School Teacher)

“The ones who are good at cricket have had a chance to really shine. There’s one who is not particularly good academically and struggles a lot and probably feels quite negative about himself but that’s an hour a week where he feels on top of the world. And on the other end, some of the lower performing girls who at the start wouldn’t know how to hold the bat, there’s lots who have particularly benefitted.” (Primary School Teacher)

This further ensures that pupils otherwise ill-served by the other sporting opportunities open to them are able to find a space within which to develop athletic abilities. Furthermore, it is generally recognised by students and teachers alike that cricket is a “democratic” game in which the variety of positions and skills needed enable students to find something particular which they are good at. Knowing that each position holds specific different requirements and needs different skill sets further opens the game to a wider number of pupils, who are able to feel valued and important within their teams when playing cricket.

“That mutual support, and learning positive comments, not negative, so saying ‘oh hard luck, you’ll get it next time’. Less negative ‘she’s not so good, we don’t want her in our team’ and more ‘we’ll help her’.” (Primary School Teacher)

“They look forward to it, ‘when’s it my turn to bat?’ because they know they are now a good batter and people want them on their team instead of ‘I’m left to last’ or ‘no one really wants me on their team’, now they’ve got a chance to shine.” (High School Teacher)

“But a lot of girls you want to target doing this won’t do it, and shy away from extra-curricular and that sort of thing, less confident, so those girls you want to target to improve you can’t get to come. The ones who have come have really enjoyed it but I wouldn’t necessarily say that they have got more than physical skills out of it.” (High School Teacher)

“There’s a whole ethos sometimes attached to extra-curricular, you get some girls going to everything and some who do nothing. They have other things to do after school. It’s a social base thing, there are some who come every week and are really committed, but some girls do no extra-curricular activities.” (High School Teacher)

Teachers felt that providing several coaching sessions during school hours (in the place of regular PE lessons) might give more children a sufficient amount of exposure to cricket (and the charismatic coach) to get them ‘hooked’ on the game before moving provision to after-school settings.

“You could target the whole class and get the whole class to come, and if you ask the whole class ‘will you come after school?’, give them all a chance and ask who will come after school and that might increase numbers a bit.” (High School Teacher)

#### 3.1.4 *Engaging Girls in Cricket*

This year, the StreetChance programme has included a deliberate focus on attempting to improve the uptake and retention of female pupils within cricket. Recognising that cricket (and indeed, sport in general) is not as popular a choice of pastime for school-age girls as it is for boys, StreetChance has deliberately targeted girls by running coaching sessions at several all-girl high schools and at an after-school community session. While many of the participating girls had played some cricket before (mostly at primary school), some were not very familiar with the sport as their schools focused striking and fielding sessions on rounders. Again as with the main programme, the role of the coach – in this case, a female coach – was pivotal in securing pupils’ interest:

“I think [having a female coach] helps because I can have a bit of banter with them... I can break the ice quite nicely with them. As soon as they turn up and see me as a female cricket coach, they think oh, well we can give it a go then.” (High School Coach)

The girls appreciate being able to ask the coach if they can practice something in particular, and the coach makes them feel good about the things that they can do well, rather than focusing on things that are bad. Some girls reported that cricket is enjoyable and satisfying when they meet their frequent and attainable targets, such as hitting or catching the ball, or learning new bowling techniques. For students who had previous experience of cricket, they reported that they were much better now:

“You keep improving every time.” (Year 7 Girl)

“I never knew that I could bowl before, but now I do.” (Year 7 Girl)

We can confidently say that StreetChance has increased the opportunities for girls to play cricket through PE and extra-curricular clubs and brought out enthusiasm and commitment in the girls involved, which would otherwise not have been possible given their schools' previous lack of cricket provision.

“When it first started I know that none of them played cricket out of school.”  
(High School Teacher)

Many of the girls who are committed to attending extra-curricular and community sessions consider themselves to be quite 'sporty' already, and were confident enough to try the extra-curricular cricket club as a result of a desire to learn more. Yet other teachers reported that the introduction of cricket is reaching different girls to those usually interested in other ball sports. In fact, cricket has become the favourite sport of some of the girls as they have found that they have a talent for it compared to other activities and they see that they participate more actively in cricket than in other PE classes. Some have even purchased cricket sets for play outside of school. However, with those girls who generally show lower interest in sport and PE, it is unclear whether StreetChance cricket has increased their participation, for they may have had little interest in taking part in any new activities to begin with.

Frequently, teachers and coaches referred to the 'girly girls' who are often more reluctant to be involved with any sport and particularly with a 'man's sport', such as they may have assumed cricket to be. The girls who participated in the programme were largely aware of and challenged the sexism implicit in the labelling of certain sports as 'for boys only' or 'for girls only'. It is likely that the girls have been exposed to this anti-sexist reasoning before the arrival of the StreetChance coach, but involvement in the programme has increased some girls' opinions that cricket can be played successfully and at the highest level by girls or women. Some girls appeared more willing to take part, having seen that other girls play, realising that it is acceptable for girls to play cricket regularly and beyond recreational level.

“Now you know that girls can actually play it... I thought it was more of a boys' sport.” (Year 7 Girl)

“It's open to girls more now.” (Year 7 Girl)

Teachers suggested that more efforts to advertise the sport as acceptable for young women through such measures as poster campaigns or visits to schools by successful female cricketers might help to change this image. The coach felt that the lack of recognition for top-level female cricketers compared to media attention for male cricketers was also a problem in communicating a positive, relatable image to female students. However, of those so-called 'girly girls' that did take part in the programme, the coach reported that they took to the sport well and developed a passion for the game:

“I was like, *they* want to play cricket? I didn’t understand, they were quite girly girls. But they were very keen and kept coming back. Two weeks ago we finished the session and then I said ok, I have a meeting now, time to go home, and they continued bowling and batting together for another hour without me. To see them doing that was phenomenal because to me they looked like they might be bored by it, but to see that tells me they’re passionate about it and want to improve... They even help to teach some of the newer girls, which is really encouraging.” (High School Coach)

Some students wished for similar coaching programmes in other sports aside from cricket. All were excited to see the coach again the following academic year, although some were concerned that coaching would not be offered to Year 9 and above, an anxiety which only demonstrates the effectiveness of the programme in enthusing a love for the game in the girls that it managed to reach this year. In addition to the girls’ schools specifically targeted, girls in mixed-sex schools have also reportedly taken part and enjoyed the provision of cricket. While uptake has been predominantly male, teachers suggested that both sexes enjoyed the same benefits of participation:

“It’s been boys and girls both... not equal numbers mind you but I know there’s been a significant number of girls who’ve gone and really enjoyed it.” (High School Teacher)

### 3.1.5 *Encouraging Club, Community, and Other Wider Participation*

As part of the StreetChance programme, coaches have encouraged children with a keen interest and talent to take up the opportunities to play in community sessions and in some cases at local cricket clubs. Additionally, the presence of the apprentice coaches at the school and community sessions provides a way for young participants in StreetChance to become aware of the possibility of following a coaching apprenticeship themselves and it was reported that some become intrigued to find out more about that path. However, it was felt by the coaches that they were somewhat alone in their efforts to advertise out of school opportunities, receiving little support from schools beyond permission to distribute leaflets and hang posters. As such, many of the pupils and teachers were unaware of community sessions being run by the coaches who had worked in their schools. Without adequate support from schools, coaches felt that pupils were less able to attend community sessions given that their attendance would be dependent on parents’ willingness to take them.

Nevertheless, in cases where links between school and community sessions were established it was felt that children’s progression within cricket was aided significantly and those who were able to attend both in and out of school benefitted from the experience. As such, the need to develop better links to the out of school sessions was frequently cited by teachers and coaches as a priority for future developments to the programme.

### 3.1.6 *Tournaments and Other Events*

One of the most highly-praised and apparently successful elements of the StreetChance programme this year has been the tournament events, where children from schools across each borough were able to play in competitive games against one-another. All parties spoken to during the course of the evaluation recognised the importance of the tournaments in giving children a focus for development, helping them to bond with teammates, providing an enjoyable day out along with opportunities to meet other young cricketers, and a means for attaining recognition in their schools:

“It has been really good for them, going to the tournaments and experiencing being a team... it’s massively valuable skills they can learn, teamwork, communication... They’ve all had leadership opportunities, that sort of thing, they get so much from it.” (High School Teacher)

“They absolutely loved the day out, a lot of them rarely if ever leave their home borough, their little area of it even. So having a day out at Lords... it’s an opportunity for them to travel, some of them have never even been on the underground before. It’s broadened their horizons. There were TV cameras at Lords and they got on TV, so it’s something for them to talk about forever really, I was on TV at school.” (High School Teacher)

It is our impression that the tournaments organised by StreetChance, or simply the opportunity to play in inter-school competitions, are vital to engaging pupils in long-term commitment to the sport and provide the necessary focus for achieving the type of enfranchisement and social benefits that the programme aims for. Several teachers and some of the coaches also felt that the tournaments needed to be developed in order to cater for more children – for instance, the girls’ schools received little opportunity to play in tournaments owing to the lack of competition from other schools. In terms of future development, expanding competitive events and improving the accessibility of existing tournaments would be a positive step. When asked how they would improve the programme in coming years, several teachers directly asked:

“Can we have more tournaments?” (High School Teacher)

“Because then it would give us a chance to get even better. To see how we compare to other people. And if we’ve changed or not. (Year 8 Boy)

## 3.2 ***Increased Attendance Rates Within Schools, Particularly Among Marginalised Pupils***

### 3.2.1 *Impact on School Attendance*

Relative to the impact on children’s engagement with PE, there is less evidence to suggest that StreetChance has had any significant impact on children’s attendance rates at school more generally, or their levels of application in

subjects beyond PE. Having not been aware that this was an objective of the programme, none of the teachers had been looking for an improvement in this area and none could suggest that such had taken place. However, several children reported that participating in StreetChance makes them look forward more to the day at school and makes them more motivated to attend, although this is not to say that attendance was an issue beforehand either in the schools generally or for the specific pupils concerned. Additionally, teachers found that more students remembered to bring their PE kit with them on cricket days compared to other activity days. As such, and despite being unable to comment on actual attendance rates, we do feel that StreetChance may have been able to make school attendance more appealing to some children. As one primary school pupil said:

“Every Friday I feel so happy because it’s cricket time, I love cricket so much that I feel really happy when [coach] is coming in. I’m not like that for the other PE, [coach] makes it better.” (Year 6 Girl)

### 3.2.2 *Impact on Pupils’ Behaviour*

It was widely reported by coaches and teachers, as well as the children themselves, that the majority of pupils participating in StreetChance were well-behaved, even those who were otherwise usually disruptive or ‘naughty’. It was felt that most of the time, the coaches were adept at handling such pupils and were quickly able to turn them from misbehaving back to focussing on the game. Strategies used by the coaches included giving disruptive or disinterested pupils extra responsibilities, such as team captaincy, or if they persisted they would be removed from the sessions, which no pupil wanted. Both strategies are reported to have worked very well in directing the energies of misbehaving children towards a more sound and productive application to cricket:

“Well if you tell them to stop it that might not work. If you tell them to stop it or they won’t get to be in the team any more, wow, that works, nobody wants to be excluded from this, you can really see that.” (Secondary School Coach)

“Once you get them to be the captain, you’ve got them into it... they encourage one another... they learn to lead by example then.” (Primary School Coach)

“He’s more willing to give us a chance to be in the team, if we’ve been a bit naughty he’ll give us a chance to think about it, to get better.” (Year 6 Boy)

In terms of the programme’s less explicit impact on pupils’ behaviour, it is apparent that their enjoyment of the game encourages the children to focus and not to act out of line during sessions. Coaches reported that often they were warned by teachers about particular individuals or groups of children who were often badly behaved during PE, yet for the duration of their time within the programme there was very little disruption from these ‘usual suspects’:

“I was given a year 9 class and the teacher told me they always had problems with this class, they’re not a very nice class, any issues and we’ll just pull them right away, they’re not the best behaved, we always have trouble with them. But they were absolutely fantastic. Loved cricket, wanted to do it every week after that... It was great that this group who got pulled out of PE so much and didn’t get to do sport much loved it and got a lot out of it.” (High School Coach)

“Some of the ones who enjoy it more than others are the ones who are known to have more of a behavioural issue elsewhere. I think it’s a different face sometimes, not like ‘oh Miss knows I’m a troublemaker’. Someone you think will be a problem with a new face, is not! She normally gives them a bit more responsibility in games, so she’s aware of having to do that to keep them in the game, give them a task to do.” (High School Teacher)

“There can be issue with them bringing their PE kit here, but on Thursdays there’s no problems, so that says it all really. So on Wednesday nights they are thinking ‘it’s cricket tomorrow, I like cricket, I’ll remember my kit’ whereas at other times they forget.” (Primary School Teacher)

Therefore, while there is limited evidence to suggest that children are attending school more regularly because of the programme, it is apparent that StreetChance has helped to motivate pupils to attend PE and whilst there, to apply themselves more fully and to refrain from engaging in disruptive behaviour. It is possible that the novelty value of being taught by an external coach – an adult who is not a teacher – may help in this regard, as almost all children reported that they could ‘get on better’ with the coaches than with their usual teachers. Inasmuch as we might describe disruptive pupils as ‘marginalised’ (through lack of proper engagement, or through punitive measures such as exclusion from class), the programme has helped to improve the chances of such children within school sport by reducing incidences of bad behaviour and the disruption it causes to their education.

### **3.3 *Increased Performance in Literacy, Communication and Teamwork Amongst All Participants but Particularly Pupils Who Use English as a Second Language***

#### **3.3.1 *Improving Literacy Skills***

It is unclear at this point whether or not the programme has been able to help improve literacy. Teachers agreed that there was potential for this through using cricket in cross-curricular work but none knew of any actual examples where this had taken place. Largely, StreetChance does not have a high profile in the schools beyond PE departments, so the application of children's enthusiasm for cricket in other lessons is limited, in spite of efforts made such as the provision of ‘CricEd’ teaching packs to the schools. We would suggest this is owing to the fact that coaches have had little contact with schools beyond a single PE teacher (and in some cases, teaching assistant), meaning that the

programme is seen as little more than another external coaching initiative, with the wider educational aims being overlooked. Furthermore, many schools already have their own specific programmes for integrating students who use English as a second language (ESL) within regular academic lessons. As such they were unable to comment on any improvements in the literacy of ESL pupils that StreetChance had made, aside from those attributable to the schemes they already implement.

### 3.3.2 *Improving Communication and Teamwork Skills*

As has already been noted, improvements in children's ability to work as a team, to communicate with each other and with their peers, and related benefits such as learning leadership skills, taking responsibility for oneself and others, etc, were reported as core benefits of the StreetChance programme.

"I'd say teamwork and communication have improved, obviously you communicate in play, and that's a lot better, from the beginning to now they have improved a lot." (High School Teacher)

Many children reported that they enjoyed being able to mix with and get to know other children, making new friends, and understanding each other better as teammates. According to one pupil:

"I think it helps with our communication with each other, like say if you were on the team with someone you didn't like before, you have to learn how to talk to them and share with them and kind of be friends." (Year 6 Boy)

This has been particularly so among 'marginalised' pupils for whom PE lessons are usually a source of frustration, anxiety or exclusion. It was felt that cricket brought something unique into the PE experiences of the children, offering those who usually miss out on the educative value of sport a chance to be involved in and reap the rewards of serious, competitive sporting opportunities. In one of the schools in particular, the programme uptake featured several ESL boys whose preference for cricket, stemming from their families' cultural background, made them enthusiastic and committed teammates. Without the StreetChance programme their enthusiasm and talent would not have likely been able to surface, yet given the opportunity they were able to compete in and win the StreetChance regional championship tournament, which:

"did a world of good for their self-esteem and for the way they get on with the others in the team. You've got boys here who don't have much recognition elsewhere, not much chance to be in charge or learn those kinds of life skills, and they're taking hold of this with both hands." (High School Teacher)

"Once they've had that opportunity (to be part of a winning team) they're different kids, they really are." (High School Coach)

### **3.4 *Increased Performance in Numeracy Skills Amongst all Pupils but Particularly Among Marginalised Pupils***

#### **3.4.1 *Improving Numeracy Skills***

As with literacy skills, there is little evidence suggesting StreetChance has been useful for improving pupils' performance in numeracy. While coaches and teachers both agreed that there is an implicit engagement with numbers in the game of cricket, this did not necessarily extend beyond the act of adding up scores, counting balls per over, or roughly calculating run rates needed to win games. In the sessions which we were able to observe, the coach often took charge of this task by tallying runs scored and did not appoint any pupils to do the scoring. However, several coaches assured us that they regularly appointed scorers during games in order to give responsibility to those pupils who they felt would benefit from it (and to engage pupils who were waiting their turn to bat or field). But the lack of any resolute attempt to use StreetChance to improve pupils' numeracy means that we cannot comment on whether or not the programme has had any real success here, as without a means to measure pupils' attainment in this area we cannot know if there has been any impact. This said, it is recognised that StreetChance could be used to this end given that children's great enthusiasm for cricket might lend itself well to cross-curricular work such as, for instance, cricketing examples used in mathematics or physics classes. If teachers were made more aware of the programme and its success in capturing pupils' imagination, such efforts might be possible and even fruitful. In our opinion this remains an item for development in the coming years, perhaps through greater efforts to advertise the 'CricEd' classroom resource and/or through greater collaboration with teachers other than PE staff.

### **3.5 *Improved Teacher Confidence to Use the Skills Learned from StreetChance to Teach Cricket Within the National Curriculum***

#### **3.5.1 *Teachers' Involvement with StreetChance Delivery***

The level of teacher engagement with the delivery of StreetChance has varied somewhat between schools. In the experience of most of the coaches, teacher involvement has a direct impact on the success of the programme delivery, as while most of the teachers are not experts in delivering cricket they can help the coaches in several other important ways. These include helping to maintain discipline within large classes; acting as coaching assistants for the class while the coach deals with individuals; becoming involved in the games as a player or umpire; and giving the coaches advice on specifically needy or mischievous pupils. While the coaches felt that they did not need teachers' help with planning lessons or devising ways of engaging with the children, they did appreciate the assistance that the teachers brought to the sessions when they performed such tasks as those listed. At the schools where teachers did not get fully involved, or disappeared from the sessions altogether, the coaches felt that their task was made significantly more difficult.

“I do my best to get involved and just do whatever (coach) needs me to do. I think it helps him having me there, reminds the children not to mess around.” (Primary School Teacher)

“With some of the teachers you feel like it’s seen as a free period for them to chill out really, sit in the class and catch up on paperwork or something... The children picked up on that and they took it as a bit of a free playtime and with so many of them there it was quite difficult on my own. Very different story to when the teachers come out with you.” (Primary School Coach)

From having observed several coaching sessions, the difference made by teacher involvement is immediately noticeable, mostly in terms of keeping larger groups of pupils focussed and under control. As class size was frequently raised by coaches as a principle difficulty in delivering StreetChance during curriculum time, the involvement of teachers towards this end is considered to be very important. Furthermore, the children’s enthusiasm for cricket was reported to be boosted by the chance to play a game involving their teachers – catching the teacher out was a significant achievement and in one of the sessions we observed where this happened, the pupils were very much applied to the task.

“I really enjoy the sessions, yeah, like getting involved. And the kids love it of course, love it when I’m batting and they try to get me out.” (Primary School Teacher)

### 3.5.2 *Teachers’ Confidence to Deliver Cricket*

A few of the teachers that we spoke to in the course of the evaluation had already implemented cricket programmes within their curriculum timetable prior to StreetChance, but it was felt by most of the coaches that this was a rarity in the boroughs within which they worked. These teachers said that the additional coaching StreetChance provided was useful and valuable, but it had not made them any more or less likely to deliver cricket as they had done previously. For the non-cricketing majority however, it was felt that their involvement in StreetChance was beneficial and opened up possibilities for their future professional development:

“I’ve already spoken to my head about this, and yes I think I would like to take extra training in cricket delivery. The kids are so keen and I enjoy it myself, I think it’s worth doing.” (Primary School Teacher)

“I’ll observe what the coach does in her lessons with the girls and then I’ll adapt that into my lessons and feed that back to my department.” (High School Teacher)

“I’m confident to deliver cricket on my own now, which I wouldn’t have been if not for this scheme.” (Primary School Teacher)

When asked, coaches also reported that they felt it was a part of their responsibility to engage the teachers in the programme as much as possible with a view to the programme's legacy:

"I know first and foremost I'm there for the children, but the teachers are important too, I want to get them involved instead of just having them sitting down marking papers, and they've enjoyed that. And maybe it'll give them more confidence to do cricket when I'm not around." (High School Coach)

Some teachers indicated that in the absence of a StreetChance coach their PE departments would now be keen to set up and run an after-school club themselves. Teachers commented on the feasibility of running cricket clubs themselves, attempting to emulate the coaching provided by StreetChance coaches, but at this stage it was felt by some of the teachers that they were unprepared and not experienced enough to take on the task alone. For one teacher, StreetChance had helped her to see how to develop basic programmes to teach large groups in a fun way, and she expressed an interest in training for teachers if this were to be offered by StreetChance. As such, while StreetChance has certainly helped to inspire a willingness among teachers to develop their own cricket provision, the relatively low level of expertise in most schools (and particularly in primary schools) means that it is unlikely that this could happen within the next year. Additional barriers to schools implementing cricket by themselves include time constraints on teachers, the need to prioritise other activities in the curriculum and extra-curricular time, children's perceived lack of enthusiasm for participating without their StreetChance coaches, and the need to meet the demands of the national curriculum:

"To be honest it's a difficult situation because at the end of the day most teachers just want to go home, they already run so many other activities and it eats up too much of your time." (High School Teacher)

"I know that they want to do cricket, but until the teachers are confident to do what I do they'll just have to follow the curriculum. And for the catching and striking stuff, cricket will become rounders in no time, and it's back to square one." (Primary School Coach)

As such it is apparent that while StreetChance coaches are being proactive in helping to develop teachers' confidence to deliver cricket, at present only a few schools within the programme would be able to continue delivery should the programme be pulled out of their schools. Building a legacy in schools where cricket was not previously played will take more time, and will require greater levels of teacher engagement than before. A dedicated teacher training element of the StreetChance programme has already been planned for next year, and our findings here suggest that this should be a productive and worthwhile effort.

#### 4. **StreetChance in the Community: Objectives 6-11**

##### 4.1 ***To Provide a Diversionary Activity that Tackles and Prevents Youth Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in Selected Areas in London***

###### 4.1.1 *Reaching and Engaging with 'At-Risk' Youth*

Coaches and police all commented on what they see as the outstanding success of the community sessions in reaching young people in marginalised communities in London. It is reported that the communities becoming involved in StreetChance are those where young people gain a negative reputation linked to where they live, regardless of gang or crime involvement. Young people in those locations can be nervous of mixing with the rest of society because they feel stigmatised by the reputation of the estates in which they live.

“There’s a big gang culture on the estate and young people might be getting attracted to violence and crime, so [StreetChance] is a good thing for them to be involved in since most of the time they get pushed away from society a bit.” (Community Coach)

“The session’s been going brilliant. It’s on their patch, they’re attracted to something happening in their area.” (Community Coach)

Frequently, coaches and young people identified the location of the community sessions as being important for encouraging attendance, with the more local the sessions being, the better. Holding StreetChance in or near to targeted ‘problem’ estates was considered a good strategy for reaching the ‘at-risk’ youth identified in the StreetChance objectives. Additionally, street cricket was identified as a very good activity for reaching children because of its accessibility, exciting and fast-paced nature, and ease of organisation. It was felt that the street cricket game helped to improve the image of cricket to the young people who saw it being played:

“These boys they might see their friends playing and say all like, why are you playing cricket man? Like, cricket’s not the game for them. But they’ll watch it and then next week they’ll be the ones down there saying oh, can we join in? Can we play? So it’s all about making it look cool, making them want it.” (Community Coach)

Holding sessions near to where the young people live and using the street cricket game means that the organisation and format of StreetChance delivery is well suited to reaching and engaging with the vulnerable young people it is set out to serve.

###### 4.1.2 *Encouraging Feelings of Pride and Belonging Through Cricket*

The young people involved in the community sessions understood the StreetChance objectives as being to get people off the streets, get people involved in cricket, and get them talking to people they don’t know. They all

agreed that these objectives were being met, and in addition they were glad for an opportunity to show their community in a good light, being proud to represent their boroughs and get in the local newspaper for positive reasons. While it is not certain whether this has any direct, tangible impact on the young people's likeliness to become involved in criminal activities, it is certain that being given the opportunity to represent their estate in a positive and socially valued way instilled a sense of civic pride in the young cricketers.

It was felt that the sense of belonging to a team and having a responsibility towards their teammates might help to deter young people from associating with gangs. One coach appreciated the role of StreetChance in deterring young people from gang-related behaviour and he was proud of the role he had been able to play:

“While the kids are in your session, they could be somewhere else doing God knows what.” (Community Coach)

In addition to this, it was believed that cricket can be good for tackling crime owing to the unifying character of the sport. The fact that cricket was fostering a sense of mutual responsibility and instilling a desire to reach for specific goals (namely winning StreetChance regional tournaments) meant that the teams of young people were being offered a meaningful opportunity to socialise whilst working towards something they could be proud of. Cricket formed the core of a constructive and enjoyable set of relationships between the young people, their coaches, cricketers from other boroughs, and even members of the local police force.

To this end, one coach stated that the efforts of a cricket coach in StreetChance have to be focused 50% on cricket and 50% on youth work. He sees the two as interlinked and thinks that delivering the programme would not be possible if the coaches did not combine these two. The community sessions he runs are more like youth social clubs than simply coaching sessions and he has deliberately formed them as such:

“If you have it in your head that it's all about cricket then this won't work, you need to know that it's not all about cricket.” (Community Coach)

## **4.2 *Break Down Barriers Between Diverse Communities Which Have Previously Struggled to Integrate (Gangs, Ethnic Groups, Religious Groups) and Aid Community Cohesion***

### **4.2.1 *Ethnic and Religious Differences***

Children's participation in the community sessions has had very positive outcomes through teaching children of different ethnic groups and from different estates how to get along with each other. Holding community sessions enables children to come together across social divisions into which they are otherwise entrenched and opens lines of dialogue between them at a young age. As

noted in the previous section, the requirements of working together in a team towards specific goals necessitate trust and friendship between children, even those from disparate groups. In some cases this has meant that young people have learned how to tolerate and respect the differences between themselves and others. For instance, in one of the community sessions it was reported that several Muslim boys were observing Ramadan by fasting, and when the non-Muslim boys of the group wanted to eat before the coaching session they deliberately avoided doing so in front of their Muslim teammates, something which the coach explained as an act of sensitivity:

“They’ve all done well to take care of each other and it’s great to see them respecting and understanding each other. They’ve known each other for three years through StreetChance and [this mutual respect] is one of the benefits of that.” (Community Coach)

Another coach emphasised the success of the StreetChance programme in bringing together children from diverse family backgrounds:

“In this area we have the Muslim kids, the Jewish kids, the West Indian kids, the English kids, and what I’ve got is them coming together playing a game. Now if the cricket wasn’t there, who knows what they would be doing but they definitely wouldn’t be together. And you know, you see them walking home together [after the sessions], I was driving home and I saw them together and I was really pleased about that. Maybe on another day they’d be fighting but here we drill it into them that in cricket you are teammates, and they really go for that.” (Community Coach)

#### 4.2.2 *Local Estates and Gang Rivalries*

Many of the coaches (both those involved in school and community programmes) and some of the teachers have commented on the rarity of seeing children and teenagers from rival estates getting along so seamlessly, particularly in the community sessions. One of the apprentice coaches expressed what he sees as a crucial objective of StreetChance through contemplating his own previous experience as a participant in a StreetChance community session in his area:

“That’s how I got involved, because I live on an estate at the moment. And I heard about a cricket session going on near where I live and so instead of me being on the streets and doing whatever on the streets I actually went down to these sessions and played cricket. Through that I made new friends from the estates opposite and so barriers between the two estates were broken because we were all playing cricket together, on the same team. So you go out as a group together, whereas normally I’d see them as an enemy, saying I would not go out with them, I wouldn’t want to know them, but as you’re playing cricket with them you’re actually getting to know that they’re not too bad, you break down the barriers and stuff.” (Apprentice coach)

Coaches recognised that through inter-community competition, the StreetChance programme has a chance to take young people on trips outside of their local areas, something which they rarely have the opportunity to do, broadening their horizons as discussed above. This gives them the opportunity to meet not only young people from rival estates but others from all across London, building relationships and gaining understanding of the world outside of their immediate (and relatively insular) areas. Particularly given the opportunity to represent their estates and their boroughs in regional competitions, playing cricket together has given young people a focus and a rallying point, with teamwork and cooperation replacing the divisions that otherwise define their lives outside of school.

“The thing about cricket is it breaks down barriers between people.”  
(Community Coach)

“Some of these kids have never even been on the London Underground, and they live half a mile from it ... They’ve never seen Big Ben, and that’s only ten miles away... StreetChance has opened up their experience and shown them what else is out there.” (Community Coach)

Many of the young people concurred, explaining that StreetChance was good for teamwork and for making new friends:

“We’ve got better as a result of this session, we are really improving our team skills. You get confidence, talking to people from other boroughs.” (16 year-old boy)

“[We’ve been] learning to get on with people, like people we’ve seen but we don’t really talk to, off the estate.” (15 year-old boy)

“I know boys from the other estate who are just like us, you know, they’re not that bad.” (16 year-old boy)

As with the school projects, competitions are a focal point for all children involved in the programme, giving a clear goal to aim for which they can focus their energies towards. Competitive opportunities are vital to the programme’s success in sustaining the engagement of children by giving them something to work towards and also motivating them to work together as a team. The competitions therefore give them the chance to identify as a cricketer, an identity they are able to share with teammates and with others.

Some of the newer community sessions are yet to take part in tournaments. Many participants who have not yet competed are excited by the chance to play and look forward to it. Their coaches state that as they are in the early days of running a session, competitions will be an idea for the future, so as not to risk losing heavily to more experienced players and put the young people off attending.

### **4.3 *Opportunities for the Police to Interact with Groups and Individuals in their Schools and Local Area, to Learn About the Issues Affecting Young People and Develop Positive and Constructive Relationships With Them***

#### **4.3.1 *Coaches' Perspectives***

Police involvement in StreetChance community coaching has come about as a part of the 'Peace at the Crease' initiative, with local police officers taking part in coaching sessions as assistant coaches and/or players alongside the local children. Coaches report that police involvement in the community sessions so far had been largely positive.

"You saw when the police turned up, [the young people] were buzzing, they love the idea of playing against them." (Community Coach)

"I think it's a great idea to have police involved." (Community Coach)

"[The young people] are starting to realise that the police are an asset to the programme." (Community Coach)

"Until we took StreetChance there I'm not sure the police realised the power of sport. The youth centre says they never saw police here before playing any sport. Now they are popping in and out, building strong relationships, playing other sports at other times too but they wouldn't have done that before. That wouldn't have happened without StreetChance." (Community Coach)

"[The young people] particularly feel they can go to him, know him on first name terms, personally, which is brilliant, any issue they have they feel they can go to him. That wouldn't happen without StreetChance; that's amazing to say that on one of the hardest estates in East London, that without cricket, the police wouldn't have engaged with different sports and been riding round the estate getting to know young people." (Community Coach)

One challenge, from the perspective of a coach, has been getting consistent support from the same officers. Although the StreetChance sessions in his area have been running for three years, the coach reports that the police have only been attending for four months (the duration of Peace at the Crease), and he rarely sees the same officers. It was felt that this would have a detrimental effect on the likeliness that the programme could help to build proper relationships between police and young people. However, having seen that there is now a designated youth department at the local police headquarters, the coach is becoming more confident that the police are committed and have the resources available to send the same officers regularly.

#### 4.3.2 *Police Perspectives*

The police officers attending the community sessions have an optimistic outlook on achieving their own goals as well as the official StreetChance objectives. The police officers invested in the programme have clear notions of what StreetChance can bring to the areas and are committed to reaching those goals.

The police officers reported that their goals are increased long term rapport with young people; developing young people's understanding of what police do; and success in decreasing the frequency and the overall number of young people getting into trouble with the law. Initially, the police and coaches both recognised that there would be some issues with engaging with young people in the so-called "hard estates" that StreetChance was targeting. They found that they had the respect of younger boys, but were struggling more to reach older teenagers. They do not, the police explain, have hostile relations with the young people, but because this is the first time some of the young people have had any positive interaction with police, relationships take time to develop. At the time of the evaluation, police reported that young people are beginning to be responsive outside of sessions, such as wanting to come and talk to them rather than run away from the sight of the police.

"The image the police have in the public isn't always true. When they get stopped and searched it creates a bad image, but they start to realise why police are here, why they get stopped and searched." (Police Officer)

One officer at a relatively new community session states that he had been keen to begin a sports-based outreach programme in his area and chose the StreetChance programme over similar programmes offered by other sporting bodies due to the optimism of the StreetChance objectives and the strength of its professional delivery:

"From the first day I got in touch with StreetChance I've been impressed. The coaches are a credit to the programme. They're making our job a lot easier." (Police Officer)

Another officer explained why he felt that cricket was particular suited to an outreach programme:

"The way I see it, [cricket's] completely different to football or rugby. The ten year-olds can play with the sixteen year-olds, everyone can get involved... while you're with your batting team you can have a chat with them, it's not like football where everyone's running around all the time." (Police Officer)

Despite the fact that Peace at the Crease has only been running for a short time, going into the programme the officers are convinced that the initiative will help young people develop a better understanding of police officers and police work. Primarily this involves encouraging young people in vulnerable areas to see police officers as people and not just as a uniform; helping them to get to

know their local officers on first-name terms; and showing them that the police take care of their neighbourhood rather than patrol it in order to get them into trouble. The police see the sessions as predominantly relationship-building exercises and not directly educational, but they believe that it is worth their time getting to know the young people in their areas as a better education about policing is considered to follow the establishment of informal relationships and good rapport.

The police officers who are involved in the project all claim to be active in promoting it to colleagues and to young people that they meet while on duty patrolling the neighbourhoods. Through word of mouth within the Metropolitan police force, more officers from other areas are taking an interest in the programme. As such the police are keen to look into extending the programme into other estates within the boroughs being served by StreetChance.

“It would be a missed opportunity if we weren’t involved, getting a chance to impart a little bit of knowledge.” (Police Officer)

#### 4.3.3 *Young People’s Perspectives*

Some young people said they had no problem with the presence of police officers at coaching sessions, and some thought that it was a positive thing:

“It’s fine, no different to playing anyone else.” (16 year-old boy)

“It’s better than seeing them on the streets ... you get a chance to talk to them.” (15 year-old boy)

With other young people, the presence of police officers originally deterred them from taking part. They reacted negatively to the sight of plain-clothes officers who they recognised from their neighbourhoods:

“Why are they there? They don’t need to be there, what they want?” (16 year-old boy)

But they appreciated the chance to play against a police team in a mini tournament:

“It was phat, like they got beaten in the tournament, my team won against them when I was captain.” (16 year-old boy)

More people want to come when the police are there, out of curiosity, although they think that some young people might be deterred because they don’t want to be seen hanging out with police, something which the coaches and the police officers themselves picked up on:

“There’s still an element of it, they don’t want to talk to you, especially in big groups they don’t want to be seen by their mates as being the one who

goes up to talk to you. But in twos or threes we can go and talk to them.”  
(Police Officer)

“The young people who come have given it a chance and go with it. But a high number won’t come while the police are there. We knew it would turn some away, from the start of the programme.” (Community Coach)

Despite coaches’ and police officers’ opinions on the success of police involvement in StreetChance, the young people as a group had mixed feelings towards their presence, with some recognising the benefits of having them involved and others being put off the programme because of it. However, in all cases it was felt by the coaches and police that it was too early in the programme to have any convincing impression of the success or failure of this venture. As such, it is felt that a comprehensive review of police involvement would be valuable in the future, both to follow up on the existing programmes and once other areas and estates who wish to join have been able to set up police involvement at their sessions. This is a clear task for any future evaluation project.

#### **4.4 *Sustained Involvement in Cricket Activity as a Meaningful Diversion through Ongoing Participation***

##### **4.4.1 *Enthusiasm for Cricket and for StreetChance***

Many of the young people playing at the community sessions are keen on cricket and played at other locations, some at school, before attending StreetChance sessions. They reported that they became involved in StreetChance because of a lack of alternatives, and that cricket is something to do when there’s not much else going on. They appreciated the opportunity to do something different, and recognised the benefits of playing sport for their health:

“We don’t really do cricket around here so it’s something different, gives us a change. Gets us to run around a bit and that’s good for your health, innit?” (16 year-old boy)

All of the young people enjoyed cricket and particularly competitive opportunities, seeing the game as a chance to improve and to exhibit their physical skills:

“I like hitting them sixes, man!” (16 year-old boy)

As with the school programmes, all participants liked the coaches and think that the way they have coached cricket has been a good way to get better at the game, reporting that all sessions have been enjoyable. They relate well with and offered their appreciation of the StreetChance coaches:

"[The coach] is organised. He's a friend. He pays more attention." (14 year-old boy)

"He's just a normal lad, he's on our level, he always talks to you on your level. When he talks to the young ones he talks like one of them, and like one of us to us". (15 year-old boy)

"He's close to our age so he knows how to act." (16 year-old boy)

#### 4.4.2 *Encouraging Ongoing Participation*

As the programmes have progressed, many coaches reported a great increase in confidence among their community session attendees and a general increase in young people's desire to attend, to practice, and to improve their abilities and gain a greater competitive edge. As such, there are sustained and increasing numbers at weekly sessions, which we attribute to a combination of effective coaching, the establishment of good relationships, and the prospect of competitive opportunities. Nevertheless it is considered by coaches that it is vitally important to ensure weekly sessions go ahead in order to not lose momentum with the programme's success so far:

"Young people want things that happen every week. Regularity is key. If it doesn't happen one week they'll think it's stopped and won't come back. We keep doing new things with them, taking them on trips, and showing them that they are important, bonding together on away trips to the country." (Community Coach)

Community sessions have grown through children bringing their friends despite a lot of initial scepticism among local youth towards cricket as an 'uncool' sport in areas dominated by football. In particular there is great demand among children participating in StreetChance at schools for an opportunity to attend their coach's community sessions. Coaches reported that it can be difficult to get new young people in because the regular attendees don't often like it and may deliberately out-play newcomers, which is perhaps one negative consequence to the otherwise very positive experience of team-building described throughout this report. Concerning this issue, the young people explained that they like smaller sessions where they might get more one-to-one coaching at times, and explained that they have a bond with each other which they wanted to protect:

"We'd love to have more people, but not too many." (16 year-old boy)

Some of the challenges facing community session attendance include parents' lack of enthusiasm to bring children to sessions, or fear over sending them into difficult or dangerous areas, particularly in the case of local estate rivalries. Hosting sessions within estates is therefore considered to be very useful for targeting children within that estate but not as effective for reaching those from outside, although some do attend such sessions. Holding community sessions in 'neutral' areas is one possible solution to this, although it limits the scope for

recruitment if it is held too far from where the young people live or attend school. At present, sessions are held in both types of settings and it is not clear if either is better as each has its own particular benefits and drawbacks concerning this issue.

Another challenge facing the community coaches is how to encourage primary age children, and girls of all ages, to attend, as older boys are more common attendees and are over-represented at each session. While a girls-only community session was run within the StreetChance programme, the fact that only one dedicated girls' session was held (as a pilot for the girls' community programme) means that there were very few opportunities for young girls to be involved in the programme to the extent that boys were (lack of competition at tournaments, fewer sites to attend for practice, etc). Given the successes of this one session however, more are currently being planned for next year. Therefore, the development of girls' cricket through StreetChance should be an item for consideration in any future evaluation.

#### **4.5 *Positive Outcomes for Young People Involved in the Programme, with Participation Leading to Training, Volunteering or Secured Employment***

##### **4.5.1 *Opportunities Through StreetChance***

Coaches reported that where appropriate they have encouraged young people to join the apprentice scheme. Where coaches have known young people over a number of years, they report that they often did not know what they wanted to do career-wise, and the apprentice scheme gives them an opportunity that they can develop at the same time as attending college or starting work.

“I might explain to them about the apprenticeship thing and about jobs, and they're like, woah, you know, it lets them know they've got lots more chances in this than just to play.” (Community Coach)

“It's given me another opportunity, the apprentice scheme, I could get a job at the end of it. Playing cricket's fun, but showing people when you're older how to play it is brilliant.” (16 year-old boy)

“Hopefully one time we'll be the coaches, influencing young people to play cricket.” (16 year-old boy)

With the more recently established sessions, it is too early to say whether any young people will become apprentices, as the coaches understand that they can't suggest apprenticeship yet until they are sure who would be good for it, but they are starting to recognise and keep an eye on potential candidates for the scheme.

It appears that there may be benefits from encouraging girls onto the apprentice scheme. Girls at school sessions wish for their involvement in StreetChance to continue beyond Year 8 at school, and this sustained involvement may also aid

with encouraging community session attendance from these girls. If they are able to continue playing cricket until they are of an age to become an apprentice, this could greatly encourage female apprenticeship uptake.

StreetChance involvement also provides incentives to young people to attend school by offering rewards or opportunities that they won't get if they don't go to school, such as away trips, one coach reported. For young people who will not take up the apprentice scheme, perhaps due to low interest in cricket, a friendship with a StreetChance coach has encouraged them to rethink their options. One coach described an attendee who did not really enjoy cricket, but attended because his friends attend:

"I still see him – that's an important part of the project too that even aside from cricket we still meet up. They still feel like they are an important part of something. He will go on to college which he wouldn't have done without the programme. It's not just about going on the apprentice scheme and doing what we do, but without this he wouldn't have gone to college."  
(Community Coach)

#### **4.6 *To Engage Young People, Including Vulnerable and at Risk Teenagers, to Develop an Understanding of the Choices Facing Them, Relationships with Other Young People, the Police and the Wider Community***

##### **4.6.1 *Engaging with the Community and with Life Choices***

As outlined previously, StreetChance has done a good job of reaching children from estates identified as being particularly problematic. The targeting of provision, the efforts of the coaches, the format of the coaching and the games being played have all helped to ensure that 'at-risk' teenagers and younger children have been well-served by the programme. At one particularly problematic estate, the establishment of a cricket team within which young boys in particular have the chance to represent their neighbourhood has served to engage them with a more positive appreciation of their local identity. Being a part of a local association of young boys without the usual territorial attitudes or violent/criminal activity that often coincides with this had a beneficial impact on their lives, at least in the short term:

"They've sort of got this sense of family now, they're part of something bigger." (Community Coach)

"They never get a moment to shine on the estate, and now they are getting it, getting that moment. And it boosts their confidence and they can brag about their estate and go to school and say that they are from [the estate] and are involved in the estate cricket team." (Community Coach)

"One of the older guys from the estate who gets involved now and then said that if something like this had been around when he was growing up he wouldn't have got involved in gangs, wouldn't have turned out the way he did." (Community Coach)

Regarding decision-making about their futures, the fact that many of the young people feel as though they are in control and have a sense of ownership over the cricket ensures an investment in the activity, along the lines of giving something to them which they can then give back to. This was a recurring theme among interviews with school and community coaches, and directly related to the likelihood of getting 'at-risk' teenagers involved in the programme as apprentices, supporting the sustainability of the project. Putting the young people in positions where they feel as though they are personally in control has been one of the programme's primary strengths in this regard.

Further to this end, a Young Ambassadors Steering Group has recently been set up to help drive the StreetChance community project. The group contains 13 young people drawn from across the London boroughs, and participates in quarterly meetings to discuss the programme and how they would like to see it develop, leaving them with actions to take away and complete. Plans for the development of this group involve eventually having one or two members taking responsibility for reporting to the Operations Steering Group that partners sit on. This recent initiative should help to emphasise the importance StreetChance places on having young people in positions of ownership and control. The development and success of this group should certainly be monitored in future evaluation projects.

#### 4.6.2 *Establishing Positive Relationships*

Within the more established community session visited during the course of the evaluation, it was evident that over time the social work aspect of the coaches' job had become very successful in engaging young people with pertinent issues facing them in their private lives, particularly questions about school attendance, future employment and concerns over drug use:

"They ask things like, what happens when you smoke cannabis? Without the cricket you wouldn't get them interested in doing that. Cricket is the pull." (Community Coach)

"It's taken nearly two years for them to be able to open up and talk about those sorts of issues. And now they've got someone else that they feel they can go to with issues, who's not going to go and grass them up, who's going to help them out. Some of them are at fear of their parents, don't want them to know about what's going on. Some other organisations are probably obligated to tell parents. But I would rather sort out the problem with the young person. We're all trained youth workers and can deal with things that come our way. There's the belief there that I can help them out and be there for them. I've almost become a bigger brother." (Community Coach)

Earning young people's trust to the point where they feel able to speak openly and directly about such difficult decisions facing them clearly demonstrates that StreetChance has succeeded in using sport as a medium for social work within difficult to reach areas. While these kinds of relationship do not develop

overnight, there is evidence to suggest that even in the much younger projects the same kinds of outcomes are beginning to be experienced. It is our opinion that forging these kinds of relationships is key to realising many of the social goals which StreetChance has been set.

As discussed above, one important set of relationships built during the course of StreetChance delivery is that concerning the young people and the police officers attending through the Peace at the Crease initiative. Given the early stage which this venture is currently in, it is not possible to confirm whether or not it has been as successful as might be hoped, but early results are promising. After a period of only three to four weeks, most of the young people in regular attendance had begun to warm to the presence of the officers and recognise that they can relate to them as something other than 'just a uniform'. It is hoped that in time, police officers can build the same kind of relationships with the young people that the coaches have managed to achieve. This would, however, require that the same officers visit sessions regularly, to ensure that the police presence is a familiar one.

## **5. Conclusions**

### **5.1 *Summary of Strengths and Shortcomings***

#### **5.1.1 *The Programme's Strengths***

The main strengths of the programme are thought to lie in the following areas:

- The talent, enthusiasm, and dedication of the StreetChance coaches;
- The strategies used by coaches to engage with difficult or otherwise marginalised children;
- The strength of the programme's central organisation and coordination;
- The adaptation of the game of cricket to a suitable format for the target demographic (i.e., street cricket);
- The popularity of the StreetChance tournaments, around which much of the young people's enthusiasm revolves.

#### **5.1.2 *The Programme's Shortcomings***

Despite the many successes which StreetChance has had, there are several areas where certain improvements could be made in order to better meet the many objectives set for the programme. The main areas where StreetChance impact has been minimal are summarised as:

- Improving pupils' performance in literacy and/or numeracy;
- Teachers' awareness of the programme's wider aims, beyond improving cricket provision;
- Teachers' ability to deliver cricket unaided by coaches;
- Advertising community sessions to school pupils and establishing links between school and community coaching provision.

### **5.2 *Summary of Positive Outcomes***

#### **5.1.1 *Positive Outcomes***

Overall, we feel that the StreetChance programme has been remarkably successful in delivering cricket to young people who have otherwise very little opportunity to be involved in the game, or in any organised sport or physical activity. The particular successes of the programme are as follows:

- Developing grassroots participation in cricket, particularly in schools and communities where the sport was previously non-existent;
- Providing excellent support to teachers in delivering cricket during curricular and extra-curricular time in schools;
- Giving marginalised pupils the opportunity to excel in a unique sport, along with all of the physical, psychological and social benefits that this entails;
- Developing mutual understanding and respect between teammates in groups of diverse young people;

- Fostering meaningful relationships between coaches and young people in particularly difficult areas of London where youth crime is prevalent;
- Building a foundation for establishing improved relationships between such young people and local police officers.

Alex Channon, Joanne Hill & Ruth Jeanes  
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