

# YDANCE 'SHAKE IT UP' EVALUATION

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# 1 KEY FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

YDance, the national dance organisation for young people aged 3 to 21, developed 'Shake it Up', an interdisciplinary dance project for Scottish schools. The project is aimed at working with primary schools that have been participating in the Scottish Government's Attainment Challenge. This project's intention is to contribute to positive culture change in schools through the arts but importantly, to use dance and a kinaesthetic learning approach as a way of enhancing a child's learning in the context of the curriculum. 'Shake it Up' strives to do this by placing a dance tutor in education in a school for a two year period.

The Robert Owen Centre (ROC) at the University of Glasgow was engaged by YDance to conduct an evaluation of the 'Shake it Up' initiative. The evaluation began in January 2017 with this, the final report, being delivered in September 2020. The initial evaluation timetable included delivering the final report to YDance in January 2021. However, the onset of the COVID pandemic and the subsequent shutdown of schools in Spring 2020 had a major impact on many school based initiatives including 'Shake it Up'. Discussions with YDance staff indicated that little additional impact from the programme could be expected during the shutdown period and that the reporting timetable should be brought forward to Autumn 2020.

The evaluation has a mixed methods approach using interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaire survey with pupils and staff. The school shutdown meant that it was not possible to run pupil focus groups in 2020.

## TEACHERS

- Nineteen teachers and three headteachers were interviewed and/or provided information via on-line proforma across eight primary schools.
- There was consensus amongst teachers that the 'Shake It Up' objectives involved using a kinaesthetic/ dance learning approach, which would enhance their pedagogical skillset to enhance learner outcomes.
- Initially, many teachers were interested in the programme but unsure how it would support their teaching. Some were anxious that they would need to be an expert in dance to teach the approach. These initial concerns were allayed by

the CLPL/training sessions run by YDance.

- Teacher experiences of the YDance programme were overwhelmingly positive and they were generally enthusiastic about their involvement in the initiative.
- Informants were often surprised and impressed at the ways dance could be used to reinforce pupil learning and develop new approaches to teaching.
- Many teachers spoke about the positive impact of the 'Shake It Up' lessons on pupil learning and also highlighted how the programme articulated well with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Experience and Outcomes.
- All interviewed teachers spoke of their enjoyment at working with the YDance tutors. Moreover, teachers frequently spoke about the teaching skills of the tutors, their ability to engage pupils and their understanding of the curriculum.
- The skills and personality of the YDance tutors were seen as key to teacher buy-in and pupil engagement. These personnel demonstrated a good understanding of school context and the curriculum and how the 'Shake It Up' approach can work with it.
- The joint planning sessions involving YDance tutors and teachers were important in creating lesson plans that maximised the learning for pupils.
- Teachers stated that the programme articulated well with the curriculum. The Shake it Up approach was especially valued by teachers as a way to enhance learning of topic based and IDL (Inter-disciplinary Learning) lessons. However, there were examples of teachers using 'Shake It Up' for teaching specific aspects of literacy and numeracy, for example punctuation.
- Most of the schools informed parents about the programme rather than adopting more active engagement. This included using social media and blogs to report developments. Some schools invited parents to workshops to demonstrate the programme. All of the schools reported that parents were supportive and often impressed by their children's enthusiasm for the lessons.
- There was evidence that the programme had been successful in engaging all pupils. However, teachers frequently reported particular success

for the programme in engaging those learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who were traditionally seen as being less likely to engage in learning.

- Boys and older children were more likely to be initially reticent about participating but became more enthusiastic as the programme continued. Presenting the lessons as movement rather than dance appeared to help engage male pupils.
- Almost all teachers believed that they would be able to continue with most aspects, if not all of the 'Shake It Up' approach. This is in contrast to the year one findings, which indicated that teachers were divided on whether they would be able to assume greater responsibility for the programme as the YDance tutors withdrew. However, for some teachers' confidence was an issue and further CLPL was seen as helpful. This could be provided by colleagues who were more experienced in using SUI and/or by YDance personnel.

## PARENTS

- Fifty parents provided feedback on the 'Shake it Up' programme via schedules distributed by YDance tutors. A majority of parental responses suggested that 'Shake it Up' had contributed to an increase in children's confidence. Moreover, parents also acknowledged support for the programmes contribution to pedagogy in the schools.

## PUPILS

- Sixteen focus groups took place across the participating schools where the YDance 'Shake It Up' programme had been running. In total 98 pupils took part in focus groups. In addition, the survey findings presented here are based on responses from 904 pupils between primary 2 and primary 7.
- Pupils in the focus groups talked about how much they had enjoyed the 'Shake It Up' experience and the overwhelming majority of pupils indicated that they were happy with the programme they had experienced.
- Many pupils shared examples of the topics and subjects they had covered during their involvement.
- Pupils particularly appreciated the active nature

of the programme and found it refreshing to engage with curriculum topics in a different mode. A number of pupils indicated how 'Shake it Up' had helped them with aspects of their learning and facilitated building relationships within the class.

- Most survey respondents enjoyed taking part in the YDance activities with their dance tutor. Levels of enthusiasm tended to be higher among the younger age group of pupils.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to report enjoying the 'Shake it Up' activities in both the younger and older pupil groups. Among the younger pupils the 'Shake it Up' programme was most frequently reported as a good help in relation to; feeling happier at school (64%), getting on better with their teacher (62%), and remembering facts about subjects (60%). For the older pupils the programme was most frequently indicated as a good help in relation to; remembering facts about subjects (55%), feeling happier at school (45%), working out answers to questions in class (41%) and working harder at school (41%).
- A clear majority of pupils in both the older (70%) and younger (74%) groups were keen to see more dance activities introduced in class.
- Among both the younger and older pupil groups female enthusiasm for further dance activities was greater than that of their male classmates.

## CONCLUSION & ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- The external evaluation findings demonstrate that the 'Shake it Up' programme has had a positive impact on pupils and staff in schools in line with the programme's objectives to promote learner engagement, self-confidence, social skills and wellbeing.
- The Shake it Up approach was particularly inclusive and motivated learners, including those pupils who were seen as less likely to engage with other lessons. The programme has also contributed to the development of new methods of effective teaching by exploring ways to use dance in cross curricular work and promote the skills and confidence of teachers to do this.
- Parents' views concurred with the positive accounts of pupils and their teachers and highlighted positive impact on their children's confidence and engagement with learning.

- Teachers indicated that the programme articulated well with the curriculum and the approach was especially valued by them as a way to enhance learning of topic based lessons and Interdisciplinary Learning.
- Teachers were overwhelmingly positive about their experience of the programme and all interviewed teachers spoke of their enjoyment at working in a collaborative way with the YDance tutors.
- The impact of the YDance programme on enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills is key to meeting the aims of the programme, given that teacher quality and effectiveness has been shown to be a crucial element in promoting positive educational outcomes.
- There was unanimous praise from teachers for the YDance tutors. The YDance team worked collaboratively with teachers in each school to tailor the content to the curriculum and needs. Teachers saw the skills and personality of the YDance dance tutors as key to their own buy-in and professional learning as well as securing pupils' engagement.
- The YDance tutors demonstrated a good understanding of school context and the curriculum and understood how the 'Shake It Up' approach could complement each school's needs.
- The Shake it Up programme developed in response to internal and external feedback during the project and Programme leadership changes. This brought a renewed emphasis on understanding school context and working collaboratively with teachers to co-design lessons.
- The evolution of the programme after the first year, with its increasing focus on working more closely with fewer teachers over a longer period of time, enhanced the tutors' awareness of school context and pedagogy as well as promoted the skills of teachers to use the Shake it Up approach.
- possible, expanded in scope. Further funding sources should be pursued, particularly from sources that are interested in promoting teachers' professional learning and learning and teaching innovation.
- In those schools where the programme has been operating, school leadership should be encouraged and supported to build on the activity and reflect the lessons learned in practice and planning.
- YDance and partner schools could explore ways of involving PE teachers and active schools specialists in their collaborative work with schools. This could help integrate and sustain lessons learned from the programme.
- While the findings of this evaluation are positive and robust it would be prudent for YDance to maintain an appropriate level of internal evaluation of Shake it Up to monitor and assess the impact of the programme as it evolves and operates in different contexts. Key to this would be exploring ways to involve learners and capture their voice.
- The evaluation reveals that the Shake it Up programme has made a positive impact in line with its stated objectives. The approach also reflects what is known regarding effective professional learning approaches. It would be beneficial for YDance to liaise more closely with local authority and Education Scotland colleagues to explore how learning from the programme could be mobilised across the system.
- YDance could consider a celebratory sharing event for those schools that have participated in the programme as well as others that have not to help share practice and ideas. This could be an online event that should also involve learners.
- As is already being considered, future developments of YDance school programmes will benefit from including a strong focus on blended learning and on-line modes of delivery and support. This will not only help deal with the challenges presented by COVID-19, but also enable the organisation to reach more geographically distant schools.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

This section draws on the main findings and discussion in the previous section to highlight some issues for consideration arising from the evaluation.

- There is sufficient evidence to recommend that the Shake it Up programme be continued as part of YDance's education portfolio and where

# 2 ABOUT THIS REPORT

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This is the final evaluation report of the YDance 'Shake it Up' programme. The document is based on findings from Phase Two of the 'Shake it Up' programme which operated in eight primary schools in Scotland between 2018 and 2020. Phase One of the programme comprised a pilot stage which ran in six primary schools in the West of Scotland and which was reported on separately.

## 2.1 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The report provides a description of the programme, an indication of the initiative's progress and highlights a number of issues for consideration. It is primarily focused on the findings from staff interviews, pupil survey and pupil discussion groups with additional comments from research team field observations.

# 3 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

YDance is the national dance organisation for young people aged 3 to 21 in Scotland; the organisation's mission is to work through key partnerships in education, culture, health and sport, to provide high quality dance experiences for all children and young people in Scotland. As a Creative Scotland core organisation, YDance has been delivering and developing dance in Scotland for over 25 years across three areas of work, participation, education and talent development.

As part of its work, YDance has particular education objectives, these are:

- To lead the development of dance in education in Scotland;
- To develop current practice and shape future delivery of dance in schools;
- To support the Experiences and Outcomes for Dance in Curriculum for Excellence, and support additional subject areas through dance;
- To inspire and train teachers to use dance in schools;
- To inspire and educate young dancers and teachers by providing educational workshop programmes linked to high quality dance productions.

YDance developed 'Shake it Up', as an interdisciplinary dance project for Scottish schools. The project works with primary schools participating in the Scottish Government's Attainment Challenge. This aim of 'Shake it Up' includes contributing to positive culture change in schools through the arts but importantly, using dance as a way of enhancing a child's learning in a particular subject. 'Shake it Up' strives to do this by placing a dance tutor in education<sup>1</sup> in a school for a two year period. This person works collaboratively with teachers, one day a week, with specific classes to develop a dance-based project within the framework of the curriculum. In the first year of the project the dance tutor takes the project lead with the expectation that the classroom teacher takes increasing responsibility for the programme. By year two of the project it is expected that the classroom teacher will have taken over responsibility for this project. This approach thus supports the sustainability of 'Shake it Up' after the dance tutor withdraws.

The Paul Hamlyn Fund provided funding for the Project and an integral part of the Project was the Robert Owen Centre (ROC) evaluation which was charged with identifying and assessing impact. The evaluation

began in January 2017 with the final report delivered to YDance in Autumn 2020.

Although the initial evaluation timetable was to deliver the final report to YDance in January 2021, the onset of the COVID pandemic and the subsequent shutdown of schools in Spring 2020 had a major impact on many school based initiatives including 'Shake it Up'. Discussions with YDance staff indicated that little additional impact from the programme could be expected during the shutdown period and that the reporting timetable should be brought forward to Autumn 2020.

The Phase One report and Phase Two interim reports additionally provided formative feedback, on the programme's development in schools, which allowed YDance and participating schools to adapt the model in the light of emerging findings.

## 3.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Following the preparation of a detailed proposal and subsequent work with the YDance team in order to ensure that the 'Shake it Up' evaluation was consistent with the overall aims of the programme a number of specific objects were identified for the University evaluation. These included undertaking research to evaluate the impact of the programme on schools, young people, and their future aspirations, as well as the YDance team.

## 3.2 RESEARCH FOCUS AND EVIDENCE

The original evaluation proposal contained a matrix which provided a breakdown of the project outcomes, associated evaluation indicators and the evidence to be collected from each of the stakeholder groups (pupils, teachers, wider partners) This was appended in the interim evaluation report.

<sup>1</sup> Referred to as a Dance tutor in this report.

# 4 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Over the duration of the evaluation, the research team used questionnaire survey and discussion groups with pupils as well as individual interviews with involved teachers. Research team members observed a number of class teacher training sessions as well as actual 'Shake it Up' sessions. Dance tutors also provided feedback on the typicality of observed sessions. Moreover, the tutors also distributed short, open ended, schedules to parents to collect their views on aspects of the programme.

the programme. Initial discussions with YDance staff indicated that pupils would be involved in 'Shake it Up' across two full terms. However, during the pilot phase it was clear that, in a number of the schools, pupils took part in the programme for one term with other classes in the school involved in the second term. From a school point of view this allowed many more pupils to experience the programme than would have been the case with pupils involved over two terms. However, from an evaluation point of view, this meant that many pupils' experienced a relatively short involvement in the dance tutor led 'Shake it Up' programme.

## 4.1 APPROACH TO ANALYSIS

### 4.1.1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Staff and pupil interviews were recorded both in note form and digital audio recording and were analysed with the assistance of NVIVO software. Analysis drew on both full and partial interview transcription to provide both clarification and illustration of the processes and factors which appeared to influence the impact of the programme. Given the bespoke nature of the developing programme in each of the schools involved, the qualitative narrative built from stakeholder accounts was important in securing an in-depth view of impact.

### 4.1.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Quantitative data was collected through pupil survey. The original design of the evaluation was for a 'baseline' and 'follow-up' survey model with pupils completing questionnaires close to the start of their 'Shake it Up' involvement and again when they had completed

Schools involved in Phase two, reported on here, were strongly encouraged by YDance colleagues to run the programme over a full two terms involving the same pupils throughout. Questionnaires could be accessed online or in paper format depending on school preference. Pupil survey responses are summarised in Table 4.1.

Pupil surveys were collected from nine primary schools in two local authorities. A total of 336 surveys were completed by cohort 1. Baseline surveys were collected in January 2019 and the corresponding follow-up surveys were collected in July 2019. The following school year, 325 new pupils completed surveys in cohort 2. In cohort 2, baseline surveys were collected in August 2019 and the corresponding follow-up surveys were collected in March 2020. The cohort 2 follow-up survey collection was brought forward as a result of the COVID-19 school lockdown. Due to unforeseen circumstances Park PS from cohort 1 was unable to continue with the programme and was replaced in cohort 2 by Deerpark PS.

**TABLE 4.1 - PHASE TWO (TOTAL BASELINE AND FOLLOW-UP) RESPONSES**

School	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Total
	P2-4	P5-7	P2-4	P5-7	
Aitkenbar PS	20	20	18	23	81
Balloch PS	24	24	13	16	77
Clackmannan PS	49	19	25	22	115
Deerpark PS	N/A	N/A	14	19	33
Park PS*	45	6	N/A	N/A	50
Our Holy Redeemer PS	49	7	6	51	113
St Kessog's PS	22	16	13	13	64
St Peter's PS	17	18	21	8	64
Sunnyside PS	0	0	34	26	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>660</b>

\*Park Primary no longer continued in the programme in 2019-2020 and was replaced by Deerpark Primary

Despite the best efforts of YDance staff over a sustained period to encourage the completion of surveys in schools, it is apparent from Table 4.1 that response rates varied considerably between schools and between survey stages. This variation was further compounded when we recognised that, even in the schools where baseline and follow-up surveys had been completed in reasonable numbers, they were not always completed by the same pupils. The net result of this situation is that baseline/follow-up comparisons were less statistically robust than we would have hoped. As a result of this we adopted an alternative approach to analysis.

We aggregated the follow-up responses from both cohort 1 and cohort 2 to maximise the numbers of pupils involved and focused on those questions which referred directly to pupil experience and impact of 'Shake it Up'. This has provided us with a substantial database of 660 pupil views to draw upon and the increased numbers allowed us to better explore the extent to which older and younger and male and female groups differed in their responses.

Questionnaires were analysed using SPSS (Statistic package for the Social Sciences) with frequencies, cross-tabulations, and relevant statistical tests deployed where possible.

### **Parents' views**

The views of fifty parents were collected by YDance tutors during the 'Shake it Up' programme. Open ended responses were analysed by looking for emerging themes in responses. Responses to closed questions were tallied and reported as a frequency and/or percentage.

### **Reflective Interviews with the YDance Team**

Following the analysis of the evaluation evidence, the research team conducted discursive interviews with the YDance Head of Education and the Two YDance tutors who were involved in the Shake it Up programme. These discussions further informed the analysis and the checking of emerging themes and issues.

# 5 STAFF AND PARENTAL VIEWS ON PROGRAMME IMPACT

This section primarily reports on teachers' and headteachers' comments on the 'Shake It Up' programme, including its impact on teaching practice and outcomes for learners. The evidence is based on qualitative information, focused on the research questions and gathered using an on-line proforma. This method was adopted as the COVID-19 situation developed and restricted face-to-face data gathering. The section also includes a short section on parental feedback regarding 'Shake it Up'.

Table 5.1 provides a summary of headteachers/teachers by school who provided qualitative evidence.

**TABLE 5.1 HEADTEACHER/TEACHER PARTICIPANTS BY SCHOOL**

School	Headteacher/Teacher Responses
Aitkenbar PS	2T
Balloch PS	2T
Clackmannan PS	1HT/3T
Deerpark PS	2T
Park PS	1T
Our Holy Redeemer PS	1HT/2T
St Kessog's PS	2T
St Peter's PS	1HT/1T
Sunnyside PS	4T
Total	21

provide more opportunities for them to succeed.

*It is a platform that gives certain children who might not shine in some areas a chance to lead in certain things.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

*It's about the children in my class [developing] an understanding, a deeper learning of whatever subject it is that we're doing through YDance... doing it through a more interactive way of learning, you know a more fun way, a more ... hands-on approach to learning and understanding facts and information rather than just reading, writing and that kind of idea.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

*It is to help enhance and embed learning through the creative medium of dance...*

*Headteacher primary school 3*

Most teachers stated that they had a limited understanding about the nature of the 'Shake it Up' programme but were interested in participating, some were interested in the relationship between the creative arts, literacy and numeracy and the process of learning.

*I was excited as I enjoy dance and taking on new initiative[s]. I was interested to be working alongside a specialist and was keen to learn new skills and abilities. I hoped that this opportunity would allow me to increase my pedagogical knowledge and improve my practice.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

Some teachers had heard colleagues in other schools talk positively about the 'Shake it Up'. However, some were also somewhat anxious. Some teachers were unsure of how dance and movement would contribute to their teaching approach and the curriculum and some were concerned that they would need to be proficient at dance to teach the programme.

## 5.1 UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE SHAKE IT UP PROGRAMME

Informants were asked about their understanding of the main objectives of the 'Shake It Up' programme and their initial thoughts when they heard their schools were to be involved in the programme. Generally, informants reported that 'Shake it Up' was a dance-based pedagogical approach that could be used to promote learning across a range of curriculum topics. There was reference to the use of creative and active learning to promote learning and attainment, particularly regarding literacy. Some also thought the programme would promote learners' physical activity and contribute to their fitness and wellbeing. Others saw it as providing an approach that was inclusive and could be used to engage with those who were inhibited about participating in more traditional lessons and

*I was a little sceptical and I was a little bit anxious, I would say, about how does this work into the curriculum? How is this going to help me, you know, like Benchmarks and Experiences and Outcomes, because at the end of the day that's what's important, is meeting all the criteria.*

***I WAS EXCITED... I HOPED THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY WOULD ALLOW ME TO INCREASE MY PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVE MY PRACTICE.***

*Teacher primary school 2*

*I was nervous...that I would need to dance in front of the pupils or lead this in some way. It is not an area I felt strong in or confident to teach. I quickly changed my attitude and opinion when working with [the dance tutor].*

*Teacher primary school 6*

*At first I had reservations as I wasn't clear on how the programme worked. Dancing wasn't really a hobby of mine either. However, my opinion has drastically changed having seen the work that goes into it and the impact that it can have I have loved the opportunity to be a part of it.*

*Teacher primary school 6*

*I was quite scared to start with, I thought, 'Oh no, dance! I don't know how to dance!'*

*Teacher primary school 1*

Such concerns were allayed by the YDance training, which teachers universally reported to be of high quality, and as teachers became familiar with the programme. Practitioners saw the training and planning process as collaborative with teachers contributing pedagogical and contextual insights that helped fine tune the approach for their learners and YDance tutors providing expertise on how the programme technique and approach could be used to enhance learning for different topic areas.

*The training was really good... [The YDance tutor] came and you could see straight away how it could be used...we've got the kind of teacher/education side, and she's has the dance knowledge... [we got] idea for lessons and things, and I can now incorporate that whereas at first we were thinking, how is this going to work?' You know, we were doing things like*

*maths.... maths through dance... and science through dance....*

*Teacher primary school 1*

*[I was] a wee bit uneasy about it because... not coming from a dance background... but [The YDance tutor] quite quickly made us feel at ease. It wasn't as scary as I thought it was going to be. [The YDance tutor] talked us through everything, everything was quite easy to pick up, great ideas.... [The YDance tutor] obviously, really well planned...and just showing you how it can work in alongside the curriculum... So, it changed my mind quite quickly and. I began to enjoy my YDance sessions*

*Teacher primary school 2*

Researcher observations of the staff training sessions indicated that staff enjoyed the experience, actively engaged in the sessions and gained a better understanding of how the Shake it Up programme could be articulated with curricular areas.

## **5.2 EXPERIENCES OF THE SHAKE IT UP PROGRAMME**

### **5.2.1 STAFF EXPERIENCES**

Interviewees' experiences of the 'Shake it Up' programme were overwhelmingly positive and they were generally enthusiastic about their involvement in the initiative. A variety of subjects had been covered across the schools ranging from mathematics, literacy, science and social studies.

As reported in section 5.2.1.1, Almost all headteachers and teachers who were interviewed were impressed at how the approach could be used to enhance pupil learning and added to teachers' repertoire of skills, some

stated that they had been 'pleasantly surprised' by the value of the approach. For example, one headteacher stressed that the 'Shake it Up' approach had been a factor in improving literacy through work on vocabulary and movement. Only one headteacher, from the first phase, indicated that the programme had not yet had such an impact. It's notable that this feedback predated the programme enhancement.

All teachers who were interviewed spoke of their enjoyment at working with the YDance tutors. Moreover, teachers frequently spoke about the teaching skills of the YDance tutors and how confident they had become in the tutors' abilities to manage and engage the pupils.

### 5.2.1.1 IMPACT

As in the previous strands of the evaluation, reported in the first interim report, participating teachers were positive in their appraisal of the impact of the 'Shake it Up' lessons on pupils' learning and were able to cite many examples of impact on learning across subject areas. For example,

*I think they learn better... and Primary 7... things like space where I (just) sit usually do a lot of things like research, they did it all through dance and movement, and they remembered a lot of things by actively, you know, doing the planets and solar systems and things like that.*

*I can see the difference in Primary 7 [and] Primary 3s, how that's really helped them with their tables, their numbers... sentence structure because they've incorporated a lot of things that [the YDance team] have been doing, they then remember when they're writing in their classroom. I didn't think that would be possible!*

*Teacher Primary school 1*

*What I did notice last year was the things that the kids remembered through Space and WW2, all through the movement, they remember so much more information and facts... they remember a lot more things working with [the YDance tutor] in conjunction with me in the classroom... What they could retain, was, I thought, a big improvement... and I was a bit sceptical initially, I thought, 'they'll never remember all this stuff'. But it seemed to last longer... Primary 3s have benefited. Times tables, definitely, it's been unbelievable... It's stuck in their minds and they are actually using it as they're doing their writing. I couldn't have asked for anything better than that... for Primary 3's it's worked... fantastically well... It's been what we need in the classroom.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

*Some who struggle with certain topics were able to understand more, for example about plant biology when using movement as an approach...*

*Teacher primary school 3*

One headteacher stated that improvements in pupils' literacy was observed for those involved with the 'Shake It Up' programme, particularly those learners from SIMD 1 and 2 this had been highlighted in school data collected for their Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) monitoring. This Headteacher also reported that the programme had also proven very helpful in promoting the learning engagement of pupils with social and emotional needs. In one example, a male P5 pupil who was difficult to engage with learning had,

*... enjoyed the programme so much he went on to join an after-school dance club and won a local authority award...he's a different child, he's found a passion.*

*Headteacher primary school 3*

Overall, then, teachers reported that the 'Shake it Up' programme had contributed to the planned outcomes for their lessons. This was facilitated by the dance tutor having a good knowledge of curriculum learning outcomes, teacher' plans and working closely with practitioners to develop appropriate lessons. Teachers highlighted how the 'Shake It Up' sessions had resulted in improved recall of information but also had helped to build on knowledge acquired in class. Teachers often

spoke of how children were learning something new at the 'Shake It Up' sessions or they were reinforcing learning that had taken place in class during the sessions which helped them to apply it in a new context as well as retain the new information.

*[Dance tutor] did a great job at interpreting my topic plans in a way that linked her outcomes very nicely to the teaching in the classroom.*

Teacher primary school 5

*In the sessions, children are able to further their knowledge and understanding of different sea creatures through the use of movement, as they take what they have learned in class and build upon this. They are given the opportunity to imagine themselves as these different sea creatures and therefore change their perspective, which I feel is very effective.*

Teacher primary school 8

*'Shake It Up' contributed very effectively to the intended outcomes... Pupils were completing initial learning in class first and then bringing this knowledge to the sessions. Whereas in previous terms [the YDance tutor] has provided the introduction to learning that we have then built on in class. I would say both approaches have been equally successful.*

Teacher primary school 6

A common theme in teacher's feedback was that positive outcomes for children were achieved regardless of their abilities. As one P5 teacher noted "It ['Shake It Up'] was very successful in supporting the embedding of learning outcomes and intentions, particularly for our more challenging learners".

*I feel the dance element was extremely beneficial for all learners, however as mentioned above, for some of my children, dance was at times, the only engagement with learning that was taking place within the day and sometimes during longer spells.*

Some teachers commented on how the 'Shake It Up' learning process helped bring another perspective to what was being learned in the classroom and assisted pupils to better conceptualise the topics and knowledge in different but complementary ways.

In addition to learning outcomes, most teachers commented on how 'Shake It Up' had promoted other positive outcomes for learners. The groupwork and partner work aspects of the 'Shake It Up' approach was seen as promoting children to develop their ability to work with others, including building interpersonal trust. Teachers frequently reported that the approach had helped to promote teamwork, social skills and leadership for pupils, particularly among those who would not typically have demonstrated confidence.

*Because some who were good at art were leading... aspects of it and others who were thinking of the dance were able... so there was a lot of collaboration*

Teacher primary school 1

*[As a result of their participation] There's a couple of pupils actually, and these are the ones who are very quiet and reserved in the*

*class, who's voice is not often heard, who are gradually, come out their shell a bit more, speaking out a bit more, talking with a lot more confidence.*

Teacher primary school 2

Other, broader positive outcomes that teachers saw 'Shake It Up' contributing to included: promoting listening and talking skills; supporting concentration; helping learners to working independently; work in in pairs; work in in small groups; work at whole class levels; and promoting a growth mindset.

The enhanced self-confidence for pupils participating in 'Shake It Up' reported by many teachers also meant that some of the more reserved children had an opportunity to express themselves and work in group situations. As a direct result, one teacher stated that "children are more confident in their own abilities and in class are answering more questions and are more ready to work in a co-operative situation". Another teacher stressed

that the impact for boys regarding their confidence had been particularly noteworthy.

*There's been improvement in [pupils'] confidence, there's also been improvement in their academic learning as well... it's linked to a specific learning objectives so as the time went on, I really noticed that the boys in my class became more involved, became more engaged, more active, their ideas... You know, conversations were much better. So, in that sense, I think it really helped the children's confidence, you know, especially my boys. My girls already had that, but the boys' confidence came on.*

*Teachers primary school 2*

### **5.2.1.2 IMPACT ON PUPILS' WIDER WELLBEING**

'Shake It Up' was also seen by most teachers as having a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing. This was often expressed in terms of, improved social skills and better self-confidence and perceptions of peers, skills and abilities which were transferrable to situations outwith the 'Shake It Up' sessions. Some teachers also commented on how 'Shake it Up' had promoted aspects of physical activity, body image and reduced social anxiety.

*I have continued to see a positive impact on the pupils. It allows those quieter more reserved children to be more confident and have their time to shine. In particular I have one pupil who is often off due to personal circumstances who when he was in school the only part of the week that he would participate in and put a smile on his face was 'Shake It Up'. This was amazing to see and it really showed me how much of an impact a programme like this can have.*

*Teacher primary school 6.*

*The children are more active and also engaging with other pupils that they may not have engaged with before.*

*Teacher primary school 5*

*I feel that the 'Shake It Up' project has been an excellent opportunity for all children to work on their wider wellbeing. It has kept them active and changed several perceptions on the gender perceptions of dance in the curriculum.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

### **5.2.1.3 TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE 'SHAKE IT UP' FEATURES THAT SUPPORTED IMPACT**

When discussing the features of 'Shake It Up' that were seen as having contributed to the reported positive outcomes, teachers highlighted several factors. The kinaesthetic method, using movement to reinforce learning and memory, was cited as was making learning 'visual', which many teachers thought promoted learning in the topics covered. The teamwork and improvisation activities were frequently praised by teachers as promoting learner engagement.

*The kinaesthetic learning has clearly made an impact on the learners as they recall facts and knowledge about the topic more easily if they have engaged in a dance session relating to the theme.*

*Teacher primary school 3*

The skill of the dance tutors was also highlighted by teachers as a major feature of 'Shake It Up' and contributed to its impact. Teachers praised the ability of the dance tutor to promote inclusion and engage with pupils of all ages, backgrounds and needs, using a level appropriate approach with the right balance of challenge and support. Teachers noted that the high level of learner engagement that resulted from the dance tutor's approach facilitated their learning.

*[The dance tutor]'s enthusiasm and wide variety of activities allowed my very energetic class to explore the topic in an active and engaging way. They built confidence by bringing their knowledge from class to the sessions and [the dance tutor] provided lots of opportunities for them to share that knowledge and experience success.*

*Teacher primary school 6*

*It allows them to learn in an active way which Primary 6 love. It gave them the opportunity for lots of peer work and time to be creative within their learning. They have really enjoyed working with [the dance tutor] and her enthusiasm encourages the children to have this sort of enthusiasm towards their learning too.*

*Teacher primary school 6*

*The structure of each lesson was consistent but progressive and the active nature of the class certainly made a difference to the attitudes of the learners. The [dance tutor's] positive approach and willingness to take on board our positive behaviour strategies, ensured consistent expectations from all adults resulting in higher level of engagement across the terms.*

*Teacher primary school 3*

The dance tutors were also commended for their understanding of the curriculum and school environment and for working collaboratively with teachers to plan lessons. The 'Shake it Up' tutors were reported as translating lesson objectives into movement routines, which the teacher then revisited in lessons during the week.

In working closely together, the teacher and dance tutor ensured that the content was linked to the curricular learning outcomes in creative ways.

***THE 'SHAKE IT UP' PROJECT HAS MET THE CFE EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES WELL. I WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF [THE DANCE TUTOR] AND HER ABILITY TO USE TEACHER-LED PLANNING TO DEVELOP THE AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM THROUGH DANCE.***

*The success of this project has to be attributed to the hard working and enthusiastic staff on the YDance team. I have to acknowledge, [the dance tutor] who has been an enthusiastic figure working with my children each week. [the dance tutor] has been incredible and a pleasure to work alongside. She is someone who inspires the children and challenges them to be the best versions of themselves through dance. [she] is keen to support learning in the curriculum and always works hard to plan, liaise and create well thought out dance sessions. A huge thank you to her!*

*Teacher primary school 1*

Teachers frequently indicated that the inclusive and practical nature of 'Shake It Up' lessons meant that young people, who often would not engage with learning in class, did so for 'Shake it Up' activities. In one case, a boy, who frequently did not attend school, came to

school on the days that the 'Shake It Up' sessions were run in order to participate.

*The children in P5 have responded extremely well to the 'Shake It Up' sessions in school. At the end we had achieved 100%*

*engagement in most of the session.*

*Teacher primary school 3*

*Most of the children enjoyed 'Shake It Up' sessions with [the dance tutors]. Some were initially reluctant, but all joined in more freely as time went on. The children enjoyed learning about the process of recycling different items such as plastic and glass.*

*Teacher primary school 5*

#### **5.2.1.4 SHAKE IT UP'S ARTICULATION WITH THE CURRICULUM**

As the programme developed and the second phase was implemented, feedback from teachers increasingly highlighted the relevance of 'Shake it Up' to topics covered by the curriculum. The skill and creativity of the YDance tutor and teacher were seen as important factors here as they worked together on lesson

planning. As a result, there was consensus across teachers' feedback that the 'Shake It Up' programme had articulated well with the curriculum Experiences and Outcomes. Indeed, the programme was seen as supporting the Curriculum for Excellence very well with the Experiences and Outcomes for each session being transparent, explicit and clearly linked. Often, teachers stated that the 'Shake It Up' lessons reinforced classroom learning and enhanced the topics covered. Teachers noted that they had explicitly built 'Shake It Up' activity into termly planning and this process was collaborative, involving the dance tutor. Teachers praised the dance tutors' awareness of the curriculum and ability to translate relevant Experiences and Outcomes into dance.

*I felt that our dance teacher was very skilled in incorporating aspects of the curriculum into dance. Lots of E's and O's were covered from science with photosynthesis and friction, to history and castles to literacy with storytelling and maths with counting.*

*Teacher primary school 3*

Teachers were reflective during the 'Shake It Up' process and lessons were learned on how to improve their planning.

*The Shake It Up project has met the CfE Experiences and Outcomes well. I was impressed with the knowledge and understanding of [the dance tutor] and her ability to use teacher-led planning to develop the areas of the curriculum through dance. The project worked best with topic work. This helped to reinforce work covered in class. However, sometimes topics were covered in dance that had not yet been covered in class - it would have been more beneficial if this had been planned better. Perhaps the class teacher could provide a clearer timetable of work to be covered rather than a wide topic planner. This project worked better with my Primary 5 pupils who have a level of maturity which allows them to be more creative and receptive to ideas through dance.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

Teachers frequently used the 'Shake it Up' lessons to tackle literacy and numeracy by adopting an Inter Disciplinary Learning (IDL) approach. For example, looking at the Titanic in a way that addressed properties of water as part of a focus on STEM. In another example,

cultural and art issues were addressed, using the approach to learn about indigenous Australian art and culture including concepts and images of 'Dreamtime'. Other teachers found the approach worked well for a range of social topics as well as STEM and numeracy.

*Social studies is excellent for it and that's really what I have tried to focus in on... Last year I did Victorians, I did London. This year, we did Space and Planets and natural disasters. But I and the [YDance tutor] have slipped in a numeracy one, we did fractions, and actually that worked really, really well.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

This meant that literacy and numeracy were addressed within a topic-focused context. Teachers often reported that the topics covered by 'Shake It Up' strengthened the approach and allowed breadth and depth to be explored. Some teachers stressed that this was more effective than trying to use 'Shake It Up' to teach Literacy and Numeracy directly. However, there were examples of teachers using the dance approach to focus on specifics of literacy and numeracy such as punctuation where pupils transferred the learning into their writing sessions and frequently remembered the dance moves associated with advanced pieces of punctuation such as semi-colon or speech marks. Teachers consistently praised the dance tutors' creativity and ideas in helping to develop the 'Shake it Up' lessons.

### **5.2.1.5 BUILDING TEACHERS' CONFIDENCE AND CAPACITY TO SUSTAIN THE APPROACH**

Teachers praised the level and quality of support provided by the YDance team. This was seen as facilitating teachers' ability to sustain the approach when the YDance team disengaged from the school.

*I think I'd be quite happy to. Keep going with it. It has opened my eyes to different ways of teaching, I think, rather than [just] being active in the classroom it's a completely different ball game when you're doing YDance and I saw that the kids responded well to it. It works. I think I'd be quite happy to keep going with it and, like I'm saying, it does sort of lend itself to lots of different curricular areas...[I'd do it] on a weekly basis.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

*We really enjoyed it and we will miss obviously the inputs from [the YDance tutor] but I think it's put us in a better position to go and teach and when I think back to where I was when I first started about... not so much looking forward to it to now thinking...we'll miss seeing [the YDance tutor] in and out but I'm quite happy to keep it going.*

*I think I'll do the same in Term 4, with that topic. And then my hope is that, if I get to stay in Primary 7 again next year...it'll be case of, 'right, I've already done that. I'm going to do it again, but I'll be more confident doing it this time', and I'll be able to extend the lessons that I've done on YDance.*

*I think we've got a bit more confidence in how we might do it ourselves, but I would say that...[the YDance tutor] has left us with thoughts and ideas, the seeds have been sown, and there will be some teachers that embrace that fully.*

*Teachers  
primary school 2*

***THE SESSIONS HAVE ENHANCED THE DELIVERY OF THE TEACHING IN MY CLASSROOM AND HAS HELPED DEVELOP MY CREATIVITY IN TERMS OF LESSON PLANNING. I HAVE GAINED SO MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THE DELIVERY OF USING DANCE ACROSS ALL CURRICULAR AREAS.***

While most of the teachers reported that the lesson plans and training had meant that they would be able to continue using the 'Shake it Up' approach, some who had worked with the YDance tutors for a shorter period of time stated that they would like more support before implementing all aspects of the 'Shake It Up' programme in their teaching. However, these teachers still intended to reflect aspects of the programme in their teaching,

As in year one one, teachers involved in year two onwards referred to and valued the joint planning sessions involving YDance tutors. This had clearly contributed to their ability to embed the 'Shake It Up' approach in their teaching. They were particularly impressed with the creativity and level of planning demonstrated by the YDance team when developing lesson plans with teachers.

*And it was...it was really interesting to see how the planning came about from saying, 'we're doing dinosaurs' and then... [the dance tutor] went away with a series of lessons, which were amazing, so, that was good. I don't think there's anything I could say that would need changed because it was all, like I say, well planned, lots of communication, you could always email her if you needed... and just took away great ideas...*

*Teacher primary School 2*

Teachers also provided examples of where they worked with the YDance tutors, to critically reflect on lessons that were felt to be working less well than expected, to refine and better meet the pupils' needs.

*There's some things we've tried and they haven't worked, and [the YDance tutor] will say that 'oh...maybe we'd need to do that again' or you think, you've planned four*

*weeks of this but you could probably do eight.*

*Teacher  
primary school 1*

In one example, a teacher explained how the skills of the YDance tutor working with the teacher,

had enabled a challenging numeracy concept to be addressed by the approach.

*The mathematical one seemed a wee bit harder to fit, but because of [YDance tutor], she's got a lot of experience and she was able to say, 'I can see where this can go' and a lot of those things.... the structure and the ideas behind it are separate from the topic, so what you're trying to do through dance, you're adapting and if you adapt it well, the kids respond, and she's been great at doing that, with them, she brings a breadth of knowledge and experience that she's used, and then she's open to ideas and... The children get opportunities to [contribute their ideas] according to how they perceive it.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

This collaborative working, sharing ideas and promoting skills, was felt to benefit both teacher and YDance

tutors. Teachers were also generally positive about the YDance teams' ability to manage pupil behaviour and engage with learners across the year groups.

Teacher primary school 1

### 5.2.1.6 THE IMPACT OF THE 'SHAKE IT UP' PROGRAMME ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

There was consensus among the teachers involved with the 'Shake It Up' programme that their experience had enhanced their professional knowledge and skills. In particular, these practitioners believed that they now had an improved understanding of how to include 'Shake It Up' in their teaching. Teachers frequently commented on how working with the dance tutors and using the 'Shake It Up' approach enhanced creativity in their teaching and promoted their confidence to try new approaches, particularly in interdisciplinary learning. Moreover, some teachers stated that the 'Shake It Up' experience had demonstrated the importance of involving pupils in their learning by drawing on pupil ideas. A common theme across teacher's comments was that involvement in the 'Shake It Up' programme had provided an opportunity to reflect on their pedagogy and explore new ideas. For example,

*The sessions have enhanced the delivery of the teaching in my classroom and has helped develop my creativity in terms of lesson planning. I have gained so much confidence in the delivery of using dance across all curricular areas.*

Teacher primary school 1

*I have learned that it is important to teach in a variety of forms, so that each learner has the opportunity to learn in their preferred style but that the element of dance, can be successful in supporting children to retain more factual information about a given theme and that the initial 'embarrassment' that was evident in the behaviour of some of my boys, does eventually slip as the enjoyment factor sets in.*

Teacher primary school 3

*This topic has provided the children with a deeper understanding of China as well as inspiring confidence and cooperation. For me, as an educator, I have a better understanding of how children learn and different strategies to encourage and deepen learning.*

These comments were typical of teachers involved with the 'Shake It Up' programme. They highlight the likelihood of teachers acquiring skills to teach the approach and embed lessons learned in their teaching practice across the curriculum.

### 5.2.2 PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT WITH 'SHAKE IT UP'

There were differences in the extent to which schools informed or engaged with parents regarding 'Shake It Up' activity. In the main, however, contact with parents was largely passive involving information transmission rather than parents being involved in, or contributing to, the programme. Where parents had commented to teachers on their children's engagement with 'Shake It Up', they were consistently positive. In some cases, schools shared news of 'Shake It Up' activities with parents at parent's evening and online via blogs. Also, some of the movement skills pupils had acquired were also incorporated into school shows where parents had an opportunity to view their achievements. Parents also reported to teachers that their children had talked to them about their 'Shake It Up' experiences and that this was almost always positive. One teacher commented that some parents who rarely provided any feedback to school did so to comment on 'Shake It Up' and the positive experiences of their children.

*Parents are sent weekly photographs of dance sessions through Class Dojo [an on-line parental news application]. There has been a good response, although it is normally the same parents. Last year P5 - parents often commented on how much their children enjoyed ['Shake It Up'] and how much they spoke about it at home. Some parents had also said that the children had taught them some of the dance movements and routines. There has been some feedback from P4 parents. A few have liked photographs on ClassDojo and left positive comments. Two children in the class have joined a dance class outwith school and I have been informed that this is a direct result of being involved in ['Shake It Up'] sessions. There is an issue with parental feedback with this class, so this is actually quite positive.*

Teacher primary school 2

Three teachers described how parents have been invited to workshops and showcases that focused

on 'Shake It Up' developments and their feedback had been very positive, stressing the impact it had had on their children. In another school parents were canvased, via questionnaire, on their views of their children participating in 'Shake It Up'. In this school most responses to the programme were enthusiastic. Another school had used feedback forms for children to complete with their parents or carers at home, and again, parents provided positive comments and support for the programme. Some teachers used video clips in their weekly news updates for parents that included 'Shake It Up' activity and comments received highlighted how much children and parents engaged with the programme.

### 5.2.2.1 PARENTAL FEEDBACK ON SHAKE IT UP

In addition to information gathered by the ROC evaluation programme, YDance tutors also collected feedback as part of their internal monitoring of the programme. This included eliciting information from parents of pupils participating in 'Shake it Up' in their school. Two different feedback schedules were used over the duration of the evaluation with information gathered from 50 parents across three of the schools involved. Overall, these indicated that the majority of responding parents held positive views about the programme and all noted that 'Shake it Up' had helped their child/children engage with topics at school. For example,

*It adds another dimension to the topic*

*Parent 10*

*They have connected the dance with the topic*

*Parent 15*

*The children seemed to enjoy the topic more with the dance*

*Parent 5*

The majority of responding parents also indicated that they had witnessed a growth in confidence in their child/children resulting from involvement in the 'Shake it Up' programme. Two comments demonstrate this view,

*He has talked a lot about the subjects at the start he didn't want to take part in dance but was really excited by today – built some confidence*

*Parent 1*

*Working in a group [has benefitted my child in] becoming more creative and having the confidence to perform, self-esteem and through understanding positive attitudes and learning to practice and persevere to produce a good performance/result.*

*Parent 3*

The parental booklets and invitational events for parents provided a useful tool for engaging parents in their child's learning as well as eliciting feedback, as one of the YDance team highlighted:

*Because we did the feedback forms for the parents to fill out it [and events]...it gave me a chance to find out what their thoughts were. Some of them probably had never experienced that sort of dance before or that sort of movement, so it was quite interesting to see their take on it. And it also gave them a chance to see what the pupils were doing...It gave me a chance to speak to some of them as well...whenever we did put on a showcase there was always an extremely good turnout which surprised teachers.*

***HE HAS TALKED A LOT ABOUT THE SUBJECTS AT THE START HE DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE PART IN DANCE BUT WAS REALLY EXCITED BY TODAY – BUILT SOME CONFIDENCE***

### 5.2.3 TEACHERS' COMMENTS ON PUPILS' EXPERIENCES

Twenty (65%) of the teacher informants also commented on their pupils' experiences of the 'Shake it Up' programme: how engaged they appeared; whether they detected differences by gender or year group; what impact they saw on pupil confidence; socialisation; behaviour; and learning. Many of the informants had already discussed pupil impact when they were talking about their own perceptions and experiences of the programme. The majority of teacher comments suggested that pupils' engaged positively with the programme. Teachers generally reported that the majority of pupils involved with the 'Shake It Up' programme had enjoyed the experience, had engaged

with the lessons and benefited from this. Teachers frequently commented on how this was greatly facilitated by the dance tutor,

*We have had a range of stages involved however all children have been actively involved in lessons, even those who were exceptionally reluctant to begin with. A major factor in the success of the programme has been the dance teacher. She motivates and encourages all pupils making them enthusiastic about dance.*

*Teacher primary school 7*

According to a number of teacher accounts, male and older pupils were more likely to be reticent about taking part in the 'Shake It Up' lessons, at least initially. In some cases, pupils had preconceived ideas about dance and its appropriateness for them, This initially meant they were reluctant to participate. However, in most cases their views shifted as they experienced the lessons. In some instances teachers preconceived views of pupil preferences were challenged.

*Lots of my class enjoyed the programme, and I was pleased that some of them came out of their comfort zones. My pupils are Primary 7 so find tasks out of their comfort zone difficult, but most pupils were able to give everything a try. Some pupils did not enjoy the dance sessions, but this was down to their personal feelings about dance. However, some of the pupils that complained about attending the dance sessions could be seen taking part and enjoying themselves.*

*Teacher primary school 4*

*Last year I had a Primary 4 class who engaged very well with the programme and really enjoyed it! I was slightly concerned that this year with Primary 7 that the boys would not engage quite as well as the boys in the younger class however I couldn't have been more wrong! All of my Primary 7 class- boys and girls- look forward to YDance every week. I feel that my lower ability children benefit greatly from expressing their knowledge through movement and this increases their confidence in class.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

Some teachers reported that the 'Shake It Up' lessons engaged those pupils who often would not take part in

lessons or they anticipated might be disruptive.

*I have had a P4/3 class and currently P5. Some of the children have been to the session both years (my P4's from last year, now P5). Initially, I thought that some of the tricky children would not cooperate and would cause problems, but it has been the opposite. It has allowed children to step out of their comfort zones and be included, socialised within the group where at other times, they may not have been. The dynamic within the group work has been a pleasure to observe, it has evolved over the year in a positive way. The males have surprised me more in that they have let down to their 'cool' act and have taken part fully.*

*Teacher primary school 5*

*My children who participated in YDance were in primary 3. Girls were much more enthusiastic towards the idea of dance than the boys. Before the first session many of the boys did not want to take part but after the first session they had all changed their minds and thoroughly enjoyed it! As the weeks went on there was little difference in the girls' and boys' attitudes. I think YDance helped children to socialise with all children in their class. I feel it helped build confidence in certain children who can be shy at times. During the first two terms I felt like YDance didn't appeal much to one boy in particular - he would take part in the warm-up then his behaviour would slip massively. However, in term 3 when we were focusing on the topic I noticed he seemed to really enjoy dance which made me realise what they are learning in dance made a huge impact.*

*Teacher primary school 7*

*Primary 6 children seem to really enjoy YDance, it's something they look forward to each week and something they regularly talk about. It allows the children who are maybe quieter to have that opportunity to shine and be confident as the learning is within a different setting. It encourages pupils to work with everyone in the class not just their 'friends' which I think leads to more positive relationships within the classroom. There is one child this year who when in attendance YDance was the only part of the curriculum that he participated in and that would put a smile on his face. This alone told me enough about the impact YDance can have on children.*

*Teacher primary school 6*

Teachers did refer to the 'Shake It Up' programme helping to promote the learning of pupils as well as improving confidence and team skills, with some suggesting that pupils were learning through 'stealth'.

*The children thrive on the dance sessions. They are able to retain information as they can remember dancing it. The sessions have had a huge impact of the children's confidence and willingness to have a go. It provided opportunities for the children to work with children in their class that they may not have worked with before. The children see have no idea they are learning, as it is so much fun!*

*Teacher primary school 1*

## **5.2.4 PUPILS' GENDER AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROGRAMME**

While some teachers noted that there was no difference between boys and girls regarding engagement with 'Shake It Up' lessons, some teachers provided examples to illustrate where boys, particularly older primary pupils, could be reticent about initially participating in sessions. These teachers suggested that in such cases boys presumed that the programme was wholly about dance and, therefore, 'for girls'. A similar viewpoint was also felt by teachers to reduce boys enthusiasm for taking part in drama lessons.

While some teachers observed that boys were more likely to be initially reticent about engaging with the 'Shake It Up' lessons, most of these teachers noted

that they usually became less self-conscious about engagement as they realised that the lessons were about movement rather than 'dance'. This realisation usually meant that boys became more involved as the programme developed in their class.

*The dynamic within the group work has been a pleasure to observe, it has evolved over the year in a positive way. The males have surprised me more in that they have let down their 'cool' act and have taken part fully.*

*Teacher primary school 5*

*Last year I had a Primary 4 class who engaged very well with the programme and really enjoyed it! I was slightly concerned that this year with Primary 7 that the boys would not engage quite as well as the boys in the younger class however I couldn't have been more wrong! All of my Primary 7 class- boys and girls- look forward to YDance every week. I feel that my lower ability children benefit greatly from expressing their knowledge through movement and this increases their confidence in class.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

*My children who participated in YDance were in primary 3. Girls were much more enthusiastic towards the idea of dance than the boys. Before the first session many of the boys did not want to take part but after the first session they had all changed their minds and thoroughly enjoyed it! As the weeks went on there was little difference in the girls' and boys' attitudes.*

*Teacher primary school 7*

Some teachers noted that certain topics where 'Shake It Up' was used, such as the Second World War, were able to engage boys more readily.

*It changed slightly because last year, it was World War 2, we'd also done it through Space, and the [boys] were like, 'oh right, this is quite masculine, it's military stuff, war elements...[The YDance tutor] covered all that to engage the boys and they were slowing starting to come round. Some of the boys had felt a bit out of their comfort zone, because...they didn't feel they could do it but actually once they started it, they realised it wasn't like keeping time with the beat – it wasn't a dance class, it was all about just different elements of movement and travel with partners in space... and they were able to kind of... eventually, feel comfortable.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

### **5.2.5 APPROPRIATENESS OF PROGRAMME FOR DIFFERENT AGES AND STAGES**

Teacher feedback and researcher observations of 'Shake it Up' sessions indicated that the flexibility of the 'Shake it Up' approach coupled with the joint teacher/dance tutor planning sessions delivered an approach that was appropriate for pupils across the age and stage range. Where a minority of teachers had reported initial difficulties in engaging pupils in the programme, this had generally involved older male primary pupils.

## **5.3 IMPROVING AND SUSTAINING THE SHAKE IT UP PROGRAMME**

As with the year one cohort, teachers expressed their satisfaction with the way that 'Shake it Up' had developed in their school and would change little if anything about the programme. Overall, teachers were confident that they could carry on using the approach in their practice. This is in contrast to the less confident and equivocal views of some teachers in the first-year cohort towards the programmes sustainability. There was consensus across interviewed teachers that they would continue using aspects of the 'Shake It Up' approach in their practice. Most stated that they would explore ways of incorporating movement in the topics they taught. Teachers especially valued the active, holistic and IDL aspects of the 'Shake It Up' approach.

*Yes, I would like to carry on using the YDance teaching method in my school after the regular support has stopped. The pupils like it and it is a makes a great cross curricular link between class subjects and P.E.*

*Teacher primary school 2*

*I would like to think that I will continue 'Shake It Up' teaching methods within my practice after the support has finished. I see the value in approaching learning from a different medium and note the enthusiasm from pupils. My hope would be to use one session of P.E. a week for general physical education/ games/skills and reserve the other session a week to explore our current topic through movement and dance.*

*Teacher primary school 6*

*Everything that YDance have done to date has been fantastic and I wouldn't change anything. In fact, I would enjoy more sessions a week. I feel that when my YDance sessions come to an end next year it will definitely become something I try to use regularly in my daily practice. I feel it's another tool in my tool belt to ensure quality and deeper learning.*

*Teacher primary school 1*

A theme running through some teacher responses was that, while they valued the 'Shake It Up' approach, there was still a need to build their confidence and skills to fully incorporate the approach in their practice. The 'Shake It Up' dance tutors had clearly enhanced teachers' professional learning but, for some, more experience and support from experienced colleagues and YDance was needed before they would adopt the whole approach. As an intermediate stage, these teachers suggested using certain elements of the approach.

*I'm not sure - I think I would take some elements of it to perhaps help reinforce some learning, but I don't see it being something I use on a regular basis.*

*Teacher primary school 7*

*I'd like to do more team teaching and then work up to leading some sessions, as the feedback from [a colleague] would allow me to be better equipped to use dance as a tool for teaching.*

*Teacher primary school 8*

While not a common perspective, some teachers stated that they did not feel able to continue using the 'Shake It Up' approach with their class. Other comments qualified this view and suggested that it would depend on the pupils in the class. This view, as one teacher indicated, was influenced by their confidence in using the approach:

*Due to my own lack of confidence I would not continue shake it up with my class. I would use the games and warm-ups/cool downs however as my class really enjoyed them. Lots of the games had learning opportunities in them so I would continue this.*

*Teacher primary school 4*

## 5.4 SUMMARY

However, for some teachers, the 'Shake It Up' experience had been a holistic and significant experience.

*YDance has been a transformative experience that has taken us all on a life-long learning journey. It has inspired the children to get active and learn in a fun and non-threatening environment... To conclude I would just like to say that this experience has been tremendous and something I will always consider when teaching new subjects or topics.*

Initially, many teachers were interested in the 'Shake it Up' programme but were unsure how it would support their teaching. Some were anxious that they lacked a level of expertise in dance to be able to teach the approach. However, the induction and training provided by the YDance team helped overcome misperceptions and established an understanding amongst teachers that the 'Shake it Up' programme involved a kinaesthetic learning approach, which would enhance their pedagogical skillset.

Teachers involved in the second phase of the programme were more likely, than their colleagues in the first phase, to see the 'Shake it Up' approach as relevant to all subject areas. Teachers highlighted that

the programme articulated well with the curriculum, and there were examples of teachers using 'Shake It Up' for teaching specific aspects of literacy and numeracy. This suggests that the increased emphasis in the second phase of the programme on YDance tutors working more closely, and for a longer period, with teachers and their pupils enhanced the approach and increased teachers' confidence and skills to adopt the approach. The 'Shake it Up' approach was especially valued by teachers as a way to enhance topic based and Interdisciplinary Learning lessons.

All teachers reported that the 'Shake it Up' lessons had a positive impact on pupils' learning, self-confidence and team working skills. Teachers often highlighted that 'Shake it Up' was very inclusive and motivated learners, including those pupils who were seen as less likely to engage with other lessons. Boys and older children more likely to be initially reticent about involvement but generally became enthusiastic as the programme continued.

Teachers' experiences of the YDance programme were overwhelmingly positive and they were enthusiastic about their involvement in the initiative. All interviewed teachers spoke of their enjoyment at working in a collaborative way with the YDance tutors.

Where parents' views were obtained, these identified benefits for their children arising from involvement in the 'Shake it Up' programme. These benefits included growth in children's confidence and/or supporting their engagement and understanding of the curriculum.

The skills and personality of the YDance dance tutors were seen as key factors in teacher 'buy-in' and pupil engagement. These personnel demonstrated a good understanding of school context and the curriculum and how the 'Shake It Up' approach can work with it. Feedback from the YDance tutors and programme manager suggests that the focus on working more closely with fewer teachers enhanced both the tutors' awareness of the school context and pedagogy while promoting their ability to promote the skills of teachers in using 'Shake it Up'.

Almost all teachers believed that they would be able to continue with most, if not all, aspects of 'Shake It Up'. This is in contrast to the year one findings, which indicated that teachers were divided on whether they would be able to assume greater responsibility for the programme as the YDance tutors withdrew. However, for some teachers' confidence was an issue and further CLPL was seen as helpful. This could be provided by colleagues who were more experienced in using 'Shake it Up' and/or by YDance personnel.

# 6 PUPIL VIEWS ON ‘SHAKE IT UP’

This section reports on the finding from the pupil focus groups and from the pupil surveys which have taken place to date and begins with the findings from the focus group discussions. As a result of the COVID pandemic and subsequent school shutdown pupil focus groups timetabled for 2020 could not take place. Findings presented here are therefore based on the 2019 focus group analysis.

School based pupil focus groups were conducted to secure a deeper understanding of pupil experiences of the ‘Shake It Up’ programme. These focus groups explored what pupils thought about the programme; how it impacted on them; and, how it could be improved in the future.

In May 2019, focus groups took place across the participating schools where the YDance ‘Shake It Up’ programme was running. Discussions with YDance staff suggested that dance tutors were well placed to lead the group discussions since they had established relationships with pupils and had a full understanding of the range of topics that each group had covered. Moreover, YDance indicated that involvement in data gathering activities would help build the evaluation skills of the organisation. A short training session for the two dance tutors involved was organised with ROC staff to talk through the research aspects of leading discussions with young people and using open ended questions. Subsequently, YDance tutors led pupil discussions in the focus groups. ROC researchers also attended these sessions, taking notes and asking additional pupil questions where appropriate.

In all of the focus groups it was apparent to the ROC researchers that the dance tutors had built very positive relationships with pupils, children were at ease in the groups and the vast majority were keen to participate.

Focus groups were digitally recorded and additional backup notes were also taken by the researchers. The major findings from these focus groups are discussed below with reference to the main interview questions.

## 6.1 PUPILS VIEWS ON THE PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPACT

The main finding emerging from all of the focus groups was that pupils had very much enjoyed their ‘Shake it Up’ experience. Pupils shared many examples of the topics and subjects that they had experienced during their involvement. Most of the pupils were unable to recall parts of the programme that they had enjoyed

less. Pupils particularly appreciated the active nature of the programme and found it refreshing to engage with topics and subjects in a different mode. The following pupil comments were typical,

*I liked it because what we done was not too scary, it was just fine. And we done loads of things, imagining things. We were imagining we were in a forest..., a jungle and I can't remember the rest. And we were in a pond I think? And then... we imagined that our feet had paint on them, and we were walking round the room....*

*Pupil primary school 1*

*I like literacy the most, because I liked when we were making the words in literacy because I like when you like try (but) just do the letters, but everybody had turns too.*

*Pupil primary school 1*

*It means we get to move around when we're doing it a lot more than we do in the classroom.*

*Pupil primary school 3*

*She [dance tutor] made sometimes boring topics into fun games.*

*Pupil primary school 2*

In all of the focus groups, there were pupils who reported that ‘Shake It Up’ had helped them to gain a better understanding of and/or improve their recall of a topic or subject in their current classes. Moreover, there were instances where older pupils recalled subjects they had experienced in previous years where they also experienced ‘Shake It Up’.

*I'm not a fan of dancing that much but after doing YDance it helped me more, be more confident in dancing*

*Pupil primary school 2*

*It helps us learn sometimes because you learn different things in YDance and then sometimes [the teacher] teaches us more things about what we learned in YDance.*

*Pupil primary school 1*

*It's like making you more active with learning.*

*Pupil primary school 1*

*You get answers that are... the questions that are a bit hard and then you remember what [the Dance tutor] said to you and you write that down.*

*Pupil primary school 2*

*When I walk back into the classroom after YDance, it kind of makes me feel a wee bit more confident .. doing my work now that I've had a bit of practice.*

*Pupil primary school 1*

*[The Dance tutor] talking to us and explaining what it means and then when we go into class, the teacher asking it and we know what it means.*

*Pupil primary school 2*

Pupils provided few original suggestions for improving the 'Shake It Up' programme and the overwhelming majority of pupils indicated that they were happy with the programme they had experienced. When probed for suggestions, pupils sought 'more of the same'. Further, pupils, whose class was not currently participating in 'Shake it Up', expressed the hope that they would reengage with the programme in future.

## 6.2 PUPIL VIEWS SUMMARY

The findings from the focus groups demonstrates that pupils greatly enjoyed being part of the 'Shake It Up' programme. Additionally, there are also robust indications that 'Shake it Up' has supported aspects of their learning, improved their confidence and social skills, and facilitated relationships within the class.

## 6.3 PUPIL SURVEY FINDINGS

This section summarises<sup>1</sup> the main findings from two years (2019 and 2020) of aggregated pupil surveys<sup>2</sup>.

**TABLE 6A - PUPIL ENJOYMENT OF YDANCE ACTIVITIES**

Pupil Group	Like dance activities a lot	Like dance activities a bit	Don't like dance activities	Total
P2-4 Pupils	63%	27%	10%	100% (N=368)
P5-7 Pupils	52%	41%	7%	100% (N=282)

<sup>1</sup> In some instances, percentages may not sum to 100% due to the process of rounding

<sup>2</sup> Section 4 summarises pupil responses by school and discusses the approach to analysis adopted here.

<sup>3</sup> crosstabulation and chi square tests of significance were performed on the data. Where reported significance is less than 0.01 it means that such a reported difference occurring as a result of sampling error would happen, on average, once in every hundred samples drawn from the data. If the value is less than 0.001 it would only happen on average once in 1000 samples.

It is divided into the following sections reflecting the structure of the questionnaire.

- Taking part in 'Shake It Up' activities
- Impact of the programme on pupils
- Enthusiasm for further 'Shake It Up' involvement

### 6.3.1 HOW MUCH DID PUPILS ENJOY TAKING PART IN 'SHAKE IT UP' ACTIVITIES?

The majority of pupils in both the younger (P2-P4) group and the older (P5-P7) groups indicated that they had enjoyed taking part in the YDance activities with their dance tutor - see Table 6a. Table 6a also suggests that levels of enthusiasm for 'Shake it Up' tended to be higher among the younger age group.

When we looked at responses by gender there was a statistically significant<sup>3</sup> difference between the males and females in both the younger (Chi Sq value <0.001) and older pupil groups (Chi Sq value <0.001).

In both stage groups females were significantly more likely than males to indicate enjoying the 'Shake It Up' activities. Among the younger pupils 75% of females compared to 52% of males indicated liking the dance activities a lot. With the older group 70% of the females and 33% of the males reported liking the dance activities a lot. Similarly, while 16% of the younger males and 10% of the older males indicated not liking dance activities the comparative figures for females was 4% and 5% respectively.

### 6.3.2 HOW DID TAKING PART IN SHAKE IT UP' ACTIVITIES IMPACT ON PUPILS?

There was good evidence from the data that involvement in 'Shake it Up' had had a positive impact on pupils in a number of ways. In the survey pupils were presented with a number of statements about their learning, relationships, and application in class and asked to indicate the extent to which 'Shake it Up' had, or had not, helped them. Table 6b and Table 6c summarises results from this exercise for both pupil groups.

**TABLE 6B - P2-P4 PUPILS - EXTENT TO WHICH INVOLVEMENT IN 'SHAKE IT UP' HELPED PUPILS**

<u>It helped me....?</u>	<u>It was a good help</u>	<u>It was a little help</u>	<u>It didn't help me</u>	<u>Total</u>
better understand my classwork	54%	28%	18%	100% (N=370)
feel happier at school	64%	28%	9%	100% (N=367)
make friends with other pupils in the school	52%	24%	25%	100% (N=370)
get on better with my teacher	62%	23%	16%	100% (N=367)
work harder at school	57%	25%	17%	100% (N=366)
remember facts about subjects	60%	24%	16%	100% (N=368)
to work out answers to questions in class	54%	28%	19%	100% (N=368)

**TABLE 6C - P5-P7 PUPILS - EXTENT TO WHICH INVOLVEMENT IN 'SHAKE IT UP' HELPED PUPILS**

<u>It helped me....?</u>	<u>It was a good help</u>	<u>It was a little help</u>	<u>It didn't help me</u>	<u>Total</u>
better understand my classwork	36%	46%	18%	100% (N=285)
feel happier at school	45%	34%	20%	100% (N=285)
make friends with other pupils in the school	28%	32%	40%	100% (N=286)
get on better with my teacher	39%	34%	27%	100% (N=286)
work harder at school	41%	35%	24%	100% (N=284)
remember facts about subjects	55%	35%	24%	100% (N=285)
to work out answers to questions in class	41%	37%	23%	100% (N=285)

It is evident from Tables 6b and 6c that younger pupils were more likely than older pupils to indicate that involvement in 'Shake it Up' was a good help in relation to each of the impact statements. On the other hand, older pupils were generally more likely than the younger group to report that 'Shake it Up' was either a little help or that it didn't help them. Among the younger pupils the 'Shake it Up' programme was most frequently reported as a good help in relation to;

- feeling happier at school (64%),
- getting on better with their teacher (62%), and
- remembering facts about subjects (60%).

For the older pupils, the programme was most frequently indicated as a good help in relation to;

- remembering facts about subjects (55%),
- feeling happier at school (45%),
- working harder at school, (41%), and
- working out answers to questions in class (41%).

In addition to the differences between younger and older pupils, we also noted some significant differences in impact when crosstabulating the data by gender. In a number of instances, the difference in responses was marked. Table 6d summarises differences for both younger and older pupils in relation to the good help

response. As the table shows, the gender differences were more pronounced in relation to the older pupils where four of the variables showed statistically significant differences in the responses from males and females. On the other hand, the gender differences were less marked for the younger pupils where only two statements showed significant differences by gender.

### **6.3.3 ENTHUSIASM FOR FURTHER DANCE ACTIVITIES IN CLASS**

A clear majority of pupils in both the older (70%) and younger (74%) groups were keen to see either a few or a lot more dance activities introduced in class. Table 6e also indicates that enthusiasm for further dance activities was generally higher among younger pupils.

There were statistically significant differences in enthusiasm for further dance activities between males and females in both the younger and older pupil groups. In both groups, female enthusiasm for further dance activities was significantly greater than that of their male classmates. Table 6f summarises levels of enthusiasm for additional 'Shake it Up' activity by pupil group and gender.

**TABLE 6D – CROSSTABULATION, HELPFULNESS OF ‘SHAKE IT UP’ BY GENDER**

<u>It helped me....?</u>			<u>P2-P4 Pupils</u>		<u>P5-P6 Pupils</u>	
			<u>It was a little help</u>	<u>Significance</u>	<u>It was a little help</u>	<u>Significance</u>
better understand my classwork	males	50%	Yes	31%	Yes	
	females	57%		40%		
feel happier at school	males	58%	Yes	34%	Yes	
	females	70%		54%		
make friends with other pupils in the school	males	54%	No	27%	No	
	females	48%		28%		
get on better with my teacher	males	58%	No	31%	No	
	females	65%		44%		
work harder at school	males	54%	No	33%	Yes	
	females	61%		47%		
remember facts about subjects	males	57%	No	50%	No	
	females	63%		60%		
to work out answers to questions in class	males	54%	No	32%	Yes	
	females	53%		47%		

**TABLE 6E - PUPIL ENTHUSIASM FOR FURTHER DANCE ACTIVITIES**

<u>Pupil Group</u>	<u>I would like a lot more dance activities</u>	<u>I would like a few more dance activities</u>	<u>Just keep it the same as now</u>	<u>I would like to stop the dance activities</u>	<u>Total</u>
P2-4 Pupils	51%	23%	16%	10%	100% (N=369)
P5-7 Pupils	46%	24%	20%	11%	100% (N=287)

**TABLE 6F- CROSSTABULATION, PUPIL ENTHUSIASM FOR FURTHER DANCE ACTIVITIES BY GENDER**

<u>Pupil Group</u>	<u>I would like a lot more dance activities</u>	<u>I would like a few more dance activities</u>	<u>Just keep it the same as now</u>	<u>I would like to stop the dance activities</u>	<u>Significance</u>
P2-P4 males	37%	27%	20%	16%	Yes
P2-P4 females	65%	18%	12%	5%	
P5-P7 males	32%	24%	27%	17%	Yes
P5-P7 females	57%	24%	14%	6%	

## 6.4 SUMMARY

In summary, both the focus group material and the survey data indicates that the ‘Shake it Up’ programme has been well received by pupils in the participating primaries where it has been operating. Moreover, there is good self-reported evidence from pupils that it has had an impact on: their attitudes towards school; their

learning; and the relationships they have developed with teachers and their classmates.

Additional analysis of the questionnaire material demonstrated that there were some significant differences in the reported views of pupils at different stages. For example, younger pupils were more likely than older pupils to: enthuse about ‘Shake it Up’; report a positive impact from the programme; and, to seek further dance activity in the school.

We also noted some statistically significant differences in the responses from males and females. Females were more likely than males to: enthuse about 'Shake it Up'; report a positive impact from the programme; and seek further dance activity in the school.

Finally it would be reasonable to conclude that younger females (P3/P4) were more likely than older males (P6/7) to respond positively to the 'Shake it Up' programme and report a positive impact on aspects of their learning, relationships and enthusiasm for similar YDance activities.

# 7 CONCLUSION AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

## 7.1 CONCLUSION

The ROC external evaluation findings demonstrate that the 'Shake it Up' programme has had a positive impact on pupils and staff in schools in line with the programme's objectives. These programme objectives include to 'support the national goal of improving attainment in primary schools' using dance and movement as a kinaesthetic process to support learning, increase learner engagement, promote learners' self-confidence, social skills and wellbeing. The programme objectives also include helping to develop new methods of effective teaching by exploring ways to use dance in cross curricular work and promote the skills and confidence of teachers to do this.

### 7.1.1 THE 'SHAKE IT UP' APPROACH AND OUR EVALUATION DESIGN

Kinaesthetic learning at the core of the 'Shake it Up' programme has been described as the process that results in learning through the involvement of one's body movement and faculties to promote cognitive processes that enhance memory and understanding. While variations in types of kinaesthetic learning approaches makes it difficult to provide a blanket assessment of the effectiveness of kinesthetics in learning and teaching, research has indicated that those kinaesthetic approaches that include movement, auditory and visual techniques can promote learning in a number of subjects (Nguyen 2004; Begel et al 2004; Presti 2016; Bransford et al 1999).

The co-production of the 'Shake it Up' approach in schools, with YDance tutors working with teachers to produce lesson plans was a strength of the programme and meant that the fine-grain design of the programme varied to suit school contexts and their curriculum. In addition, the programme itself evolved to reflect lessons learned as it developed, with a greater focus on working more intensively with fewer teachers and a greater appreciation for promoting teachers' skills. Together, these factors had implications for the evaluation design. It was not viable or appropriate for this evaluation to include direct measurement of shifts in participating pupils' attainment, for example, using pre and post programme standardised tests. Rather, it meant that a mixed method approach that emphasised a more qualitative, in-depth methodology to gather relevant evidence from teachers and pupils

was appropriate, rather than a positivistic approach that looked to measure attainment using standardised tests.

### 7.1.2 IMPACT OF THE 'SHAKE IT UP' PROGRAMME ON LEARNERS

Drawing on the evidence from our study, particularly, teachers' professional judgment and learners' accounts, we found that the 'Shake it Up' programme demonstrated a positive impact on pupils' learning, self-confidence and team working skills. The 'Shake it Up' approach was particularly inclusive and motivated learners, including those pupils who were seen as less likely to engage with other lessons.

The 'Shake it Up' programme was well received by pupils in the participating primary schools. Moreover, there was robust self-report evidence from pupils that it has had an impact on their attitudes towards school, their learning and the relationships they have developed with teachers and their classmates.

Pupil survey findings demonstrated that there was some variation in the views of pupils by gender and age. For example, younger pupils and females were more likely than older pupils and males to enthuse about 'Shake it Up', to report a positive impact from the programme, and, to seek further dance activity in the school. While, in some cases, boys and older children were more likely to be initially reticent about engaging in the lessons, these groups became more enthusiastic as the programme continued. In general, pupils were enthusiastic about their involvement in 'Shake it Up' and were keen to see the programme sustained.

Evidence from teachers concurred with pupils' positive views and revealed a range of positive impacts on pupils, including those with additional support needs. Parents' views concurred with the positive accounts of pupils and their teachers and highlighted positive impact on their children's confidence and engagement with learning.

### 7.1.3 THE IMPACT OF 'SHAKE IT UP' ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PRACTICE

Teachers involved in the second phase of the programme were more likely, than their colleagues who took part in the first phase, to see the 'Shake It Up' approach as relevant to all subject areas. Overall, teachers believed that the programme articulated well

with the curriculum, the approach was especially valued by teachers as a way to enhance learning of topic based lessons and Interdisciplinary Learning. Teachers were overwhelmingly positive about their experience of the programme and all interviewed teachers spoke of their enjoyment at working in a collaborative way with the YDance tutors.

The impact of the YDance programme on enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills is key regarding the aims of the programme, given that teacher quality and effectiveness has been shown to be a crucial element in promoting positive educational outcomes. For example, research has shown that in the classrooms of the most effective teachers, students from disadvantaged backgrounds learn at the same rate as those from advantaged backgrounds (Hamre & Pianta 2005). The contribution of the programme to teachers' abilities regarding IDL is also noteworthy, given that this approach is seen by the Scottish Government as key to effective delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and has been shown to be particularly effective for promoting attainment, engagement and attendance (RSE 2020; Education Scotland; STEMEC 2016).

#### **7.1.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EVIDENCE-INFORMED COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING APPROACH**

There was unanimous praise from teachers for the YDance tutors. The YDance team worked collaboratively with teachers in each school to tailor the content to the curriculum and pupil and staff needs. The induction and training provided by the YDance team helped overcome initial misperceptions and helped establish an understanding of the 'Shake it Up' objectives among the teachers. Teachers saw the skills and personality of the YDance tutors as key to their own buy-in and professional learning as well as securing pupils' engagement. Tutors demonstrated a firm understanding of school context and the curriculum and understood how the 'Shake It Up' approach could fit each school's needs. The 'Shake it Up' approach to the co-construction of lesson plans brought together the representative qualities of teacher and YDance tutor.

Evaluation discussions with the YDance team highlighted that the programme benefits from being informed by theory and experience, including an understanding of effective professional learning. This has brought an appreciation of school systems, classroom dynamics and teaching approaches. It highlighted the importance of professional learning and teacher confidence for promoting learner outcomes

as well as the value of co-production of lessons with teachers as an effective model of professional learning.

The YDance Head of Education took time to gain an understanding of each school's context, spending time observing the 'Shake It Up' lessons and talking to teachers. The HoE recognised the importance of having active engagement of the headteacher and senior leadership team for the programme in each school, something that was not always present in the first phase of the programme. The YDance tutors were also able to draw on their own higher education and wider experience which brought valuable insights on how schools operate.

Increased dialogue and collaboration with teachers highlighted that teachers in the first phase of the programme were not always aware of how the approach could help promote learning and attainment. In some cases this had led to scepticism and a defensiveness about why had they been selected to participate. Increasing engagement with teachers was a priority for the programme's Head of Education, this included promoting the YDance tutors' ability to discuss with teachers how the programme could promote learning as well as increasing their awareness of pedagogy. Professional learning resources and tools were created as part of the project for teachers but also for the YDance tutors. One example was an observation checklist which gave tutors a visual representation of each teacher's understanding of the 'Shake It Up' approach and what they needed to work on to improve their understanding or confidence.

Getting teachers' buy-in and building their confidence was crucial, not just for their ability to sustain the approach but also for maintaining the engagement of their pupils. As one of the YDance team observed, teachers' focus, and engagement was linked to that of their learners,

*We tried to make sure that we would leave a legacy with the teachers, but I wasn't sure how that was going to happen if we didn't involve them more. And then I realised that the emotional response or engagement of the pupils really did rely on the teacher, because if the teacher was disengaged and sat at the side, the pupils would slowly drift off...I felt like the outcomes were achieved faster and probably more effectively when ... the teacher was more responsively engaged and realised that the dance artist was on a learning journey as well.*

## 7.1.5 THE EVOLUTION OF THE SHAKE IT UP PROGRAMME

'Shake it Up' developed in response to internal and external feedback during the life of the project, but perhaps the greatest step-change in its design occurred following the appointment of a new Head of Education. This brought key insights on teachers' professional learning that stimulated a renewed focus on how the YDance tutors worked with teachers to co-design lessons. The programme also moved to focus on working with fewer teachers and their pupils over a longer period of time whilst also ensuring active involvement from the school leadership and raising awareness of the programme across the school.

Feedback from the YDance tutors and the programme leadership suggests that the evolution of the programme after the first year, enhanced the tutors' awareness of school context and pedagogy as well as promoted the skills of teachers to use the 'Shake it Up' approach. In the first phase of the project teachers were more likely initially to report that they were interested in the programme but unsure how 'Shake it Up' would support their teaching. Some were anxious that they would need expertise in dance to be able to teach the approach. This was less evident in the second phase of the programme and possibly the result of stronger professional relationships and increased efforts to raise awareness of the programme in the schools, including the provision of more structured CLPL. The importance of the more systematic CLPL was highlighted by one of the YDance team,

*In phase two there was much more of a structured approach to the training that the kind of CPD days that we did with the teachers... they were much more structured and much more focused in building the blocks for the teachers. You could see in the schools that had those CPDs, the difference in confidence.*

Given the aforementioned increase in CLPL focus, it is perhaps, not surprising that, in contrast to the first phase of the programme, almost all phase two teachers believed that they would be able to continue with most aspects, if not all of the 'Shake It Up' approach, once the YDance team withdrew. The design of the programme included providing sufficient professional learning to ensure that teachers were confident to embed the 'Shake it Up' techniques into their practice once the YDance teams disengaged. However, as the COVID-pandemic took hold it disrupted the later stages of work with the schools and meant that a minority of the teachers were less confident than their colleagues

in using all of the approach. These teachers identified a need for further support from their colleagues who were more experienced in using the approach or from YDance personnel.

The second phase of the programme also included more of a focus on eliciting parental feedback and engagement as the YDance management recognised the importance of parental engagement in children's learning.

## 7.2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

This section draws on the main findings and discussion in the previous section to highlight some issues for consideration arising from the evaluation.

- There is sufficient evidence to recommend that 'Shake it Up' be continued as part of YDance's education portfolio and where possible, expanded in scope. Any expansion of the programme would, however, likely have resource and staffing implications. Funding for the Programme finishes in December 2020. Further funding sources should be pursued, particularly from sources that are interested in promoting teachers' professional learning and learning and teaching innovation.
- In those schools where the programme has been operating, school leadership should be encouraged and supported to build on the activity and reflect the lessons learned in practice and planning. The enhanced capacity of teachers involved in the programme to use the 'Shake it Up' approach will be limited to them, unless headteachers are encouraged to enlist these teachers to share the learning and contribute to their schools CLPL.
- YDance and partner schools could explore ways of involving PE teachers and active schools specialists in their collaborative work with schools. This could help integrate and sustain lessons learned from the programme.
- While the findings of this evaluation are positive and robust it would be prudent for YDance to maintain an appropriate level of internal evaluation of 'Shake it Up' to monitor and assess the impact of the programme as it evolves and operates in different contexts. Key to this would be exploring ways to involve learners and capture their voice.
- The evaluation reveals that the 'Shake it Up' programme has made a positive impact in line with

its stated objectives. The approach also reflects what is known regarding effective professional learning approaches. It would be beneficial for YDance to liaise more with local authority and Education Scotland colleagues to explore how learning from the programme could be mobilised across the system. Such dialogue would also likely further enhance the development of the 'Shake it Up' Programme.

- YDance could consider a celebratory sharing event for those schools that have participated in the programme as well as others that have not to help share practice and ideas. This would help motivate teachers to continue the approach. This could be an online event that should also involve learners. The outcomes would also help provide further evidence of impact for future funding bids.
- As is already being considered, future developments of YDance school programmes will benefit from including a strong focus on blended learning and on-line modes of delivery and support. This will not only help deal with the challenges presented by COVID-19, but also enable the organisation to reach more geographically distant schools.
- Online and recorded video tutorials are also likely to be helpful in maintaining links with those schools who have been involved in the 'Shake it Up' programme and providing teachers with useful ideas and resources. As the YDance team has suggested, these could include resources that translate the Shake it Up inputs to different school contexts and capacities; such as limited physical space for activity.

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