

# Reviewing the game plan

## What can be learnt from the first year of Play.sport?

Sally Boyd, Jo MacDonald, Eliza Stevens, and Rachel Felgate



13 MARCH 2017

New Zealand Council for Educational Research  
P O Box 3237  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
[www.nzcer.org.nz](http://www.nzcer.org.nz)

© Sport New Zealand 2017

# Acknowledgements

The authors of this report would like to extend grateful thanks to the following people for their willingness to share their time, perspectives, and reflections with us:

- the staff we visited at 14 schools in the Upper Hutt and Waitakere communities
- school staff who completed the teacher survey
- the Play.sport workforce, managers, and national and community stakeholders.

We would also like to thank our NZCER colleagues who reviewed this report.



# Table of contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	1
<b>Key messages from the first year of Play.sport</b> .....	6
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	7
What is the purpose of this report? .....	7
What is Play.sport? .....	7
About the evaluation of Play.sport.....	8
Connecting data sources and evaluation questions.....	9
Methodology: How and why was data collected?.....	11
<i>Using surveys to collect baseline and needs assessment data</i> .....	11
<i>The teacher survey</i> .....	11
<i>The student survey</i> .....	13
<i>Survey data interpretation</i> .....	13
<i>Using survey data to inform practice</i> .....	14
<i>Interviewing stakeholders about the set-up year of Play.sport</i> .....	14
Ethics.....	15
Limitations of the evaluation design .....	15
Reading the report.....	16
<i>A quick guide to reading the descriptive interview data</i> .....	16
<i>A quick guide to reading the graphs and text in this report</i> .....	16
<b>2. Setting the scene: The need for Play.sport</b> .....	17
What was the situation in schools before Play.sport? .....	17
Indicator 1: Resources and PLD .....	17
<i>Teachers have a need for assistance in planning HPE learning</i> .....	17
<i>The HPE learning area is not a high priority in primary schools</i> .....	19
Indicator 2: Teacher confidence .....	20
Indicator 3: Quality PE provision .....	22
<i>Inclusive planning in PE</i> .....	22
<i>Working together in PE</i> .....	24
<i>Thinking in PE</i> .....	25
<i>Learning about our community in PE</i> .....	26
<i>Keeping active in PE</i> .....	27
<i>Keeping safe and healthy in PE</i> .....	28
<i>Teachers and students have similar views on PE practice</i> .....	28
<i>Schools identify a range of barriers to offering a quality PE programme</i> .....	29
<i>A holistic vision for change in HPE</i> .....	30

Indicator 4: Quality external provision .....	31
Indicator 5: Participation.....	33
<i>Student and teacher data shows similar messages about participation.....</i>	34
<i>Some schools find it hard to make connections to support participation.....</i>	35
Indicator 6: Active school culture.....	36
<i>School leader views: An active culture is not formally planned.....</i>	36
<i>Teacher views: Some aspects of an active school culture are in place .....</i>	37
<i>Schools have a vision for an active culture that promotes inclusion .....</i>	38
Play.sport could offer schools needed PLD and support .....	39
Summarising the baseline data and looking to the future .....	41
<b>3. The Play.sport model: On your marks, get set, go .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Gaining buy-in for a new way of working.....	43
<i>Schools signed up to Play.sport for varied reasons .....</i>	43
<i>Schools are at different stages of engaging with the Play.sport model.....</i>	44
<i>Taking time to build relationships has laid a foundation for change.....</i>	47
<i>All stakeholders are ready for some more focused action .....</i>	47
<i>School-wide buy-in has not yet been established in many schools .....</i>	47
<i>Strategies are needed to engage harder-to-reach teachers or schools .....</i>	48
The high quality workforce is a strength of Play.sport.....	51
<i>Role clarity and communication is developing .....</i>	51
Communicating clear messages .....	53
<i>What's in a name?.....</i>	53
<i>Having consistent messages prepared from the start.....</i>	53
<i>Shifting the model.....</i>	54
Building a community alliance has had a slower start.....	55
Looking ahead to 2017.....	56
<i>Focused action for schools in 2017.....</i>	56
<i>Building community connections.....</i>	57
<i>Workforce and stakeholders: Building on the foundation for 2017.....</i>	57
<i>Navigating system tensions and alignments is important for success .....</i>	60
<b>4. In summary: Reflecting on the game plan .....</b>	<b>63</b>
The baseline data from schools shows a need for support.....	63
Schools are ready for concrete plans and action .....	63
<i>Setting up Play.sport: What is enabling school buy-in and engagement? .....</i>	64
<i>The lessons learnt about building school buy-in and engagement .....</i>	64
<i>Recommendations about where to next for schools in 2017.....</i>	64
Role clarification and ongoing learning for the workforce.....	65
Recommendations for Sport New Zealand in 2017.....	65
Reviewing the game plan .....	66
References.....	67

# Tables

Table 1	Data collection activities and evaluation focus.....	10
Table 2	The teacher survey indicators.....	12
Table 3	Quality external provision.....	32
Table 4	Participation in PE and physical activity.....	34

# Figures

Figure 1	Evaluation timeline .....	9
Figure 2	Teacher access to teaching resources.....	18
Figure 3	Teacher access to PE planning support.....	19
Figure 4	Teacher reports of HPE priority .....	20
Figure 5	Teacher confidence in the four Health and PE strands .....	21
Figure 6	Teacher confidence in the seven key learning areas of Health and PE .....	22
Figure 7	<i>Inclusive planning in PE</i> .....	23
Figure 8	<i>Working together: How often do students in your classes</i> .....	24
Figure 9	<i>Thinking: How often do students in your classes</i> .....	25
Figure 10	<i>Learning about our community: How often do students in your classes</i> .....	26
Figure 11	<i>Keeping active: How often do students in your classes</i> .....	27
Figure 12	<i>Keeping safe and healthy: How often do students in your classes</i> .....	28
Figure 13	School leader views on an active school culture .....	37
Figure 14	Teacher views on an active school culture .....	38
Figure 15	School perceptions of the Play.sport model .....	46

# Appendices

Appendix 1:	Play.sport intervention logic .....	68
-------------	-------------------------------------	----

## Key messages from the first year of Play.sport

The overall purpose of this report is to assist Sport NZ and other decision-makers to consider next steps for Play.sport after its first year. This report is a summary of two sets of data:

1. Baseline survey data collected from staff and students at Play.sport schools in Term 2 of 2016 (prior to schools starting Play.sport activities). The survey data is mostly from primary and intermediate schools.
2. Information gathered from interviews with school, workforce, and national and community stakeholders in Term 4 of 2016 about their experience of the first year of Play.sport.

Play.sport is offered in two communities (Upper Hutt and Waitakere). The key messages are more similar than different across these communities for students, schools, and the workforce.

### **The baseline data paints a picture of Health and PE as sidelined in primary schools**

The baseline survey data collected from school staff and students shows that schools are promoting an active culture and this culture is valued by the majority of students. This culture is more ad hoc than planned. The current focus on literacy and numeracy has been a key factor in sidelining the Health and PE (HPE) learning area in primary schools. Schools recognise this and have a broad range of areas they would like to develop that are well aligned with the focus areas of Play.sport. The data suggests the main needs of schools include support:

- to further develop a strategic vision in relation to PE, physical activity and sport that fosters inclusion, engagement, and the development of student competencies;
- in the form of professional learning and development (PLD) that assists schools and teachers to: shift thinking from a fitness or sport-based approach to PE towards a holistic and integrated approach that reflects school visions and the NZ curriculum;
- that builds teacher confidence particularly in less frequent aspects of quality PE practice such as *Thinking in PE* and *Learning about our community in PE*;
- to address the current ad hoc use of external providers and community connections by rationalising and strengthening these connections so they align with school visions for students.

### **Relationships are established and schools are ready for action**

Time has been taken to recruit a workforce that has built strong relationships and created a foundation for change. Schools mostly value the emergent Play.sport model that is focused on their contexts and needs.

### **Looking to the future in 2017**

Now relationships with the workforce are in place, **schools' main need is for focused action in regard to planning and PLD for all or some teachers in 2017**. Other refinements to Play.sport suggested by stakeholders include:

- addressing internal non-alignment (e.g., the link between KiwiSport and Play.sport and the name of Play.sport)
- PLD for the workforce relating to the challenging aspects of their role: being an adult educator and change agent (PE mentors and facilitators); and shifting from a provision role to brokering a community alliance (activators)
- consider workload and time management support for the workforce
- strengthen processes to enable the workforce to more easily work across teams, locations, and organisations
- continue building clarity of: workforce roles; Play.sport in secondary schools; and the community alliance
- work strategically to align the visions of education and sports-related agencies to support Play.sport
- develop stronger systems for sharing practice between schools.

In 2017 it will be important to retain the flexibility of the Play.sport model to adapt to emergent school, workforce, or community needs whilst also providing a few more processes to support schools and the workforce.



# 1. Introduction

## What is the purpose of this report?

This report presents baseline and implementation data gathered from a range of Play.sport stakeholders during 2016. The report aims to assist Sport New Zealand (Sport NZ) and other decision-makers to consider what the data suggests might be next steps for the initiative. This formative focus is appropriate for Play.sport as the initiative uses an emergent model, and is in the first year of development.

## What is Play.sport?<sup>1</sup>

Play.sport is led by Sport NZ. This community-based initiative aims to improve the quality and quantity of physical education (PE) and sport in schools and communities. Play.sport is a multi-layered approach to the provision of PE and sport which offers hands-on, practical support and training for teachers, schools, parents and community organisations to improve the quality of the PE and sport experience for young people. The approach includes professional learning and development (PLD), workforce support, community alliances, and the sharing of facilities.

**Play.sport aims to build a youth-focused system** that ensures all young people in a community have access to quality, fun, and challenging physical activity, PE, and sport experiences that help them to be active, engaged, learning, and succeeding. For young people the ultimate longer term outcomes of Play.sport are to:

- improve young people's physical and mental health
- increase young people's engagement at school and improve their academic performance
- enable young people to be better citizens through contributing to local and global communities (for a fuller description of outcomes, see the Play.sport intervention logic in Appendix 1).

**Play.sport is a step-change to the way PE and sport is delivered in schools**, and is aligned with recent global best practice guidelines for quality PE and activity (UNESCO, 2015). The government is investing in Play.sport primarily through Sport NZ, supported by the Ministry of Education and the Accident Compensation Corporation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Text adapted from Play.sport information resources.

**Play.sport is currently available in two communities (Upper Hutt and Waitakere).** At the time the survey data for this report was collected, Play.sport involved 44 schools, 16 in Upper Hutt and 28 in Waitakere. This included 38 primary or intermediate schools, and six secondary schools. The initial Play.sport funding and support for schools, and for the evaluation, is for 3 years (2016–18).

**Play.sport funds three types of workforce support roles:** curriculum facilitators who assist with strategic planning; PE mentors who provide advice and support to teachers; and activators who act as a broker with the community to support students to be active in non-curriculum time. The workforce works with schools and communities to provide PLD and support to build community-wide approaches to PE, physical activity, and sport. The curriculum facilitators and PE mentors are managed by Team Solutions (a provider of PLD services for schools). The activators are managed by the Regional Sports Trust (RST) in Waitakere and the city council in Upper Hutt.

The workforce provides support to schools using an **emergent and school-directed approach** based around school context and needs. Through providing this support Play.sport aims to enhance young people’s wellbeing by improving:

- teacher confidence in the planning and delivery of the PE curriculum
- connections to co-curricular and extra-curricular sporting opportunities
- the consistency and quality of outside providers of physical activity and sport.

## **About the evaluation of Play.sport**

The NZCER evaluation of Play.sport is designed as a mixed-method **process** and **outcome** evaluation. As Play.sport is a new initiative, the initial focus in 2016 and 2017 is on **process evaluation**. That is, working with stakeholders to provide information about current practice and possible implementation enablers and barriers so this information can be used formatively to build and strengthen Play.sport.

**The main focus of this report is providing data to inform the development of Play.sport.** The main evaluation question this report addresses is:

*“1. What are the enablers and barriers to implementing the initiative in the two targeted communities?”*

The full set of evaluation questions can be viewed in Table 1 on p. 10.

In 2018 the evaluation focus will shift to outcomes. The baseline student and teacher survey data collected in 2016 will be used to provide one foundation for the **outcomes evaluation**. This outcomes evaluation will incorporate data from a range of sources including the repeat of key survey questions that explore school practice, as well as case studies of school change. The shift in focus of the evaluation is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Evaluation timeline

Evaluation focus	2016 (Baseline and Process)		2017 (Process)		2018 (Outcomes)	
	Early 2016	Late 2016	Early 2017	Late 2017	Early 2018	Late 2018
Process activities	Student and teacher survey	School, workforce, and stakeholder interviews		School, workforce, and stakeholder interviews		
Baseline and outcome activities	Student and teacher survey				Repeat student and teacher survey	Case studies of effective practice

There are two types of evaluation services supporting Play.sport. In addition to the evaluation discussed in this report, a team of researchers from the University of Waikato are using a collaborative practitioner research and inquiry model, to work with the workforce, to demonstrate change, and inform the evolving development of Play.sport.

## Connecting data sources and evaluation questions

There are two sets of data that inform this report:

1. Information from **baseline surveys of teachers and students** at Play.sport schools prior to schools starting Play.sport activities.
2. Information on the **set-up or implementation of Play.sport collected via interviews with school, workforce, and national and community stakeholders.**

The connection between data sources and the evaluation questions is shown in Table 1. This table shows that, although the primary aim of the end of 2016 interviews was to gather information about the implementation process, the discussions also covered other evaluation questions. This table also shows how the focus of the student and teacher baseline surveys are connected to the evaluation questions.

Table 1 **Data collection activities and evaluation focus**

Evaluation questions	Data collection method			
	Surveys	Surveys & interviews	Interviews	
	Students	School teachers/ leaders	Play.sport workforce	Stakeholders (National/ Community)
<b>Questions about the implementation process</b>				
1) What are the enablers and barriers to implementing the initiative in the five sites of two targeted communities?		√	√	√
2) What are the enablers and barriers to implementing an integrated and comprehensive community-wide approach in the five sites of two targeted communities?				√
5) How well are the schools connecting with community groups (e.g. providers) to deliver quality physical activity, PE and sport? What are the enablers and barriers?		√	√	√
7) How well are the providers and other community groups connecting to provide quality sport opportunities to school students? What are the enablers and barriers?			√	√
9) How well do providers deliver quality physical activity and sport into schools?			√	√
<b>Questions about outcomes</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>School teachers/ leaders</b>	<b>Play.sport workforce</b>	<b>Stakeholders (National/ Community)</b>
<b>CURRICULUM/SPORT PROVISION OUTCOMES</b>				
3) How well is physical activity, PE, and sport being prioritised/embedded in the schools' culture, policy and processes?		B/N	√	
6) What is the quality of physical activity, PE, and sport opportunities in these schools, and do they meet the needs of young people?	B/N	B/N	√	
<b>PROVIDER QUALITY OUTCOMES</b>				
8) To what extent has the quality of providers working in schools improved?		B/N		
<b>TEACHER OUTCOMES</b>				
4) What is the impact of support/training provided to school teachers on teacher confidence and competency to deliver quality physical activity, PE, and sport?		B/N		
<b>STUDENT OUTCOMES</b>				
10) Has students' ability, confidence, enjoyment and motivation to participate in physical activity, PE, and sport improved as a result of Play.sport?	B/N			
11) Has there been an increase in physical activity levels and participation in sport?	B/N	B/N		
12) Has there been an improvement in health, education and social outcomes as a result of Play.sport?	B/N			
<b>Symbol key</b>	√ = This question was discussed in interviews		B/N = Baseline and needs assessment data collected	

## Methodology: How and why was data collected?

Data from a range of Play.sport stakeholders informs this report. The main sources of data, how they were collected, and for what purposes, are described below.

### Using surveys to collect baseline and needs assessment data

**The first main set of data referred to in this report** is survey data collected from Play.sport schools. Teacher and student surveys were completed at the end of Term 2 of 2016, prior to schools starting Play.sport activities. The collection of this data serves two purposes:

1. to provide **baseline data** for the later outcome evaluation
2. to provide information to contribute to a **needs assessment of school context and current practice** to inform the development and implementation of Play.sport.

### The teacher survey

**The online teacher survey** was designed to provide information on six main indicators of expected outcomes identified in the Play.sport evaluation questions and intervention logic (see Appendix 1). The main indicator areas and sub-indicators, and their connection to the evaluation questions, are shown in Table 2.

The teacher survey was aimed at all teachers at primary schools and Health and PE (HPE) teachers at secondary schools. This survey mostly focused on teachers' HPE practice and current support needs. The survey asked about HPE as this is the wider learning area within which PE practice is integrated. Most questions were in the form of 3- to 5-point scales. The scales explored the frequency of practices or extent of: access to resources; confidence with HPE; or agreement with statements about teacher or school practice. The survey also included a small section answered only by staff with leadership roles. This section focused on *Indicator 6: Active school culture*, and leader perceptions of support and PLD needs.

To develop questions for the teacher survey relating to each indicator we drew on existing tools such as the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement: Health and Physical Education 2013 (EARU & NZCER, 2015) teacher surveys, UNESCO benchmarks for quality PE (UNESCO, 2015), Sport NZ's definitions of Physical Literacy,<sup>2</sup> and the Youth Sports Trust self-review tool for PE and school sport.<sup>3</sup>

The teacher survey was piloted by a small number of teachers from non-Play.sport schools and reviewed by Sport NZ staff. Following this, a school contact was sent a link to the survey and asked to share this with teachers.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/attachments/About-us/2015-PhysicalLiteracyDocument-Online.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.youthsporttrust.org/sites/yst/files/Sporting\\_Start\\_FinalProof\\_Wallplanner%20FINAL.pdf](https://www.youthsporttrust.org/sites/yst/files/Sporting_Start_FinalProof_Wallplanner%20FINAL.pdf)

Table 2 The teacher survey indicators

Main indicator area: Teachers	Main focus / Sub-indicators
<p><b>1. Resources and PLD</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 4. What is the <b>impact of support/training</b> provided to school teachers on <b>teacher confidence and competency</b> to deliver quality Physical Activity, PE, and Sport?</i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Teacher access to PE support, resources and PLD  <b>Sub-indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to support for PE planning</li> <li>• Access to PE resources (teaching, equipment, spaces)</li> <li>• Access to PE PLD</li> <li>• Priority of PE</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Teacher confidence</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 4. What is the <b>impact of support/training</b> provided to school teachers on <b>teacher confidence and competency</b> to deliver quality Physical Activity, PE, and Sport?</i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Teacher confidence in teaching the strands and focus areas of the HPE learning area</p>
<p><b>3. Quality PE learning opportunities/teacher competence</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 6. What is the <b>quality of Physical Activity, PE and Sport opportunities</b> in these Schools and <b>do they meet the needs of young people?</b></i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Quality PE teaching practice  <b>Sub-indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive planning in PE</li> <li>• Keeping safe and healthy in PE</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical literacy sub-indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active in PE</li> <li>• Working together in PE</li> <li>• Thinking in PE</li> <li>• Learning about our community in PE</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Quality external provision</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 8. To what extent has the <b>quality of providers</b> working in schools improved?</i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Use and alignment of provider programmes with curriculum</p>
<p><b>5. Participation</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 11. Has there been an <b>increase in Physical Activity Levels and participation</b> in Sport?</i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Teacher and student participation  <b>Sub-indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class time spent on PE, fitness</li> <li>• Use of physical activity in other learning areas</li> <li>• Teacher involvement in physical activity/sport</li> </ul>
Main indicator area: Schools	Main focus / Sub-indicators
<p><b>6. Active school culture</b>  <i>Related evaluation question: 3. How well is <b>Physical Activity, PE and Sport being prioritised/embedded</b> in the schools' culture, policy and processes?</i></p>	<p><b>Focus:</b> Embedding an active school culture  <b>Sub-indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active school culture (teachers)</li> <li>• Active vision and planning (school leaders)</li> </ul>

### Who completed the teacher survey?

In total we received teacher surveys from 28 of the 44 (64%) schools that were part of Play.sport including three secondary, five intermediate, and 20 primary schools. Response rates varied between schools (from one to 20 staff). Reflecting the larger number of schools in Waitakere more surveys were received from the schools in this community. **If school leaders also had teaching responsibilities they completed BOTH the teacher and leader sections.** The teacher survey was completed by **177 staff (166 completed the teacher section, and 50 completed the leader section)**. Respondents included:

- 50 staff from Upper Hutt schools (45 teachers and 18 with leadership roles)
- 127 staff from Waitakere schools (121 teachers and 32 with leadership roles).

## The student survey

The baseline student data has previously been reported (Boyd & Felgate, 2016), therefore only high level findings are included in this current report. The student survey was designed to provide information on the five main indicators of the expected outcomes noted in the Play.sport evaluation questions and intervention logic:

1. Quality learning opportunities
2. Participation in physical activity
3. Enjoyment and confidence
4. Engagement and belonging
5. Health and wellbeing

To develop questions for the student survey relating to each indicator we drew on existing tools as described in the student survey report (Boyd & Felgate, 2016). Most questions were in the form of 4-point agreement or frequency scales. The survey was in hardcopy format. The student survey was trialled by a number of Year 4–8 students, then piloted by a class of Year 4 students at a low-decile school that was not part of Play.sport.

### *Who completed the student survey?*

The student survey was aimed at Year 4 and 6 students at primary schools, and Year 7 students at intermediate schools. As some students were in multi-year level classes, students from other year levels also completed the survey. We received student surveys from 29 of the 38 (76%) primary and intermediate schools that are part of Play.sport. Overall, the student survey was completed by **3,185 students in Years 3–8** including:

- 886 students from 10 schools in Upper Hutt
- 2,299 students from 19 schools in Waitakere.

## Survey data interpretation

This report includes **detailed findings from the teacher survey**. In some cases, comparisons are made between data from Upper Hutt and Waitakere. **The primary reason for making a comparison is to inform next step actions by identifying an area where more or less emphasis might be needed in each community.** It is important to be cautious making comparisons between communities as they were not randomly selected or matched for the purposes of comparison. Therefore each community has a different context and population.

For the quantitative teacher survey data a difference is highlighted if there is 10 percentage point or more difference between the two communities. When comparing proportions (or percentages) the number of responses is important. The larger the number of responses the smaller the difference needs to be to become statistically different due to sample error. A 10 percentage point difference was selected to reflect the number of respondents who completed surveys. For a return sample of 177 (50 surveys from Upper Hutt and 127 from Waitakere), 10 percentage points represents a difference that is likely to be meaningful.

The teacher survey included some open-ended questions which were coded into themes. Teachers and school leaders could give many possible answers to these questions, therefore the number who mentioned each theme is lower than if the questions were asked in a fixed-choice format. We have included a theme if it was mentioned by 5% or more respondents from at least one community, as this is a large enough group to suggest a common theme.

For the student survey findings, commentary is included on the connection between student and teacher survey reports to parallel questions. In looking for similarities and differences we examined the pattern of responses across questions rather than comparing percentages. Students and teachers respond in different ways to questions that had slight differences in wording and response scales. For these reasons it is not valid to do a direct comparison.

The future outcomes report will include statistical analysis of patterns of change over time by comparing baseline student and teacher survey data to 2018 data.

## Using survey data to inform practice

To ensure the baseline survey data was able to contribute to an assessment of current school practice and needs, school level reports of student and teacher survey data have been sent to schools, and community level reports to the Play.sport workforce. These reports provide stakeholders with a picture of student and teacher perspectives on practice and suggest areas that could be developed through Play.sport.

## Interviewing stakeholders about the set-up year of Play.sport

The second set of data referred to in this report is interview data that was primarily collected to explore the first evaluation question: *What are the enablers and barriers to implementing the initiative?* This data was collected in Term 4 of 2016, a time when most schools had been through a scoping and relationship-building phase with the Play.sport workforce. Data included:

- **interviews with 27 staff from six schools in Upper Hutt and eight in Waitakere.** These schools were nominated by Play.sport staff. We mostly visited schools that were rated by Play.sport management as having a medium or high level of engagement with Play.sport processes and stages of implementation. We also visited at least one low engagement school in each community. We prioritised high and medium engagement schools as school staff at these schools were more likely to be in a position to comment on Play.sport. We visited schools of different types (primary, intermediate and secondary). We talked to six school leaders (mostly principals) and five lead teachers in Upper Hutt schools, and eight school leaders and eight lead teachers in Waitakere schools. In most cases we had a joint discussion with school leaders and lead teachers.
- **individual or group interviews with the Play.sport workforce including all curriculum facilitators, PE mentors, activators, and lead community managers.** We talked to five people working with the Upper Hutt community and 11 with Waitakere. At the time of the interviews the Upper Hutt activators had not yet started their role.



- **individual interviews with seven national or community stakeholders** from Sport NZ and other organisations involved with Play.sport. There were two main groups of stakeholders. One group were stakeholders involved in the national management of Play.sport, the development of processes, or in delivering professional learning to the workforce. The second group were community-based stakeholders involved in building a community alliance.

For each school, workforce, or national and community stakeholder interview we recorded a set of notes. These qualitative notes were organised into themes relating to the evaluation questions and indicators.

## **Ethics**

The evaluation methods and instruments of this evaluation were reviewed and accepted by NZCER's ethics committee. NZCER ethics emphasise accuracy, objectivity, frankness and openness in the conduct of research and evaluation, analysis and reporting. Informed consent and confidentiality are integral to our projects. For this study, although the schools and some of the people interviewed are known to Sport NZ, participants were offered confidentiality in reporting. The text and quotations have been checked to ensure that any details that might identify individuals have been removed. School level reports of survey data are confidential to each school and the workforce team the school works with.

## **Limitations of the evaluation design**

Response rates to the teacher survey varied between schools (from one to 20 staff at schools which returned surveys). This variation could lead to the over-representation of perspectives from some schools. However, the strong similarities between Upper Hutt and Waitakere teacher perspectives suggest schools have more commonalities than differences.

There was substantial overlap in the schools which returned both teacher and student surveys, but the two groups of schools are not identical. Therefore care needs to be taken drawing conclusions about similarities and differences between these groups.

There are only a small number of secondary schools involved in Play.sport and therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions from the small amount of data collected from these schools.

For the school interviews, the prioritisation of schools that had high and medium engagement with Play.sport may have resulted in a slight over-representation of positive views about Play.sport implementation. However, two schools that were rated as having lower levels of engagement were also included.

## Reading the report

This report provides baseline data from the teacher survey and high level findings from the previously reported student data. This report also includes survey data reported for each community (Upper Hutt and Waitakere) and commentary from interviews conducted in each community. These data are presented or labelled by community in acknowledgement of the different community contexts, and to support next step actions based on local data.

### A quick guide to reading the descriptive interview data

The data from interviews is reported descriptively. Where practices, perspectives, or future suggestions are common across the majority of a group of interviewees we use terms such as **“a strong theme”**, **“nearly all schools”**, or **“most schools”**. Where there are a smaller group of schools or interviewees (around one-quarter to a half) who report similar practices, perspectives, or suggestions we use the term **“some”**. If a perspective or suggestion is unique to one or two schools or interviewees, we use terms such as **“a couple”** or **“a few”**.

Quotes are used from survey or interview data to illustrate key themes. These quotes are colour coded: **blue for Upper Hutt**, **purple for Waitakere**, and **green for national and community stakeholders**.

Most school leaders and teachers were interviewed together so we have labelled these interviews ‘school’, as it is not possible to separate leader or teacher views. Quotes are labelled ‘survey’ if they come from responses to open-ended survey questions. Quotes from interviews are labelled school, workforce, or national or community stakeholder. In some cases we have removed aspects of the label or colour-coding to protect confidentiality.

### A quick guide to reading the graphs and text in this report

Each scale in the teacher survey had different response options which are shown in graphs or tables. There is a small amount of missing data for most questions. Missing data is included on graphs. For ease of reading it has been excluded from tables.

In some cases the percentage reported in the text differs slightly from that reported on the graphs. This is due to the rounding of percentages on the graphs.

The teacher survey tables and graphs show the responses from 45 Upper Hutt and 121 Waitakere teachers. A few sections of the teacher survey were only completed by school leaders. This data is labelled ‘school leader’ and includes responses from the 18 Upper Hutt and 32 Waitakere staff with leadership responsibilities. Care should be taken interpreting the leader data due to the smaller number of respondents.

## 2. Setting the scene: The need for Play.sport

### **What was the situation in schools before Play.sport?**

This section of the report presents a **baseline picture of practice and school needs prior to schools starting Play.sport** activities. This section primarily draws on the teacher survey data from 177 school staff collected in Term 2 of 2016.

Where key themes also emerged in the school interviews this data is also included. This section also includes high level student survey findings and commentary about the connection between student and teacher views.

The main part of this section is structured around the 6 main teacher and school indicators (see Table 2 on p. 12):

1. Resources and PLD
2. Teacher confidence
3. Quality PE provision
4. Quality external provision
5. Participation
6. Active school culture

The section also includes commentary on teacher and school leader views about possible barriers to developing PE programmes that reflect the New Zealand curriculum, and school views on the PLD and support desired from Play.sport. This data is mainly focused on primary schools.

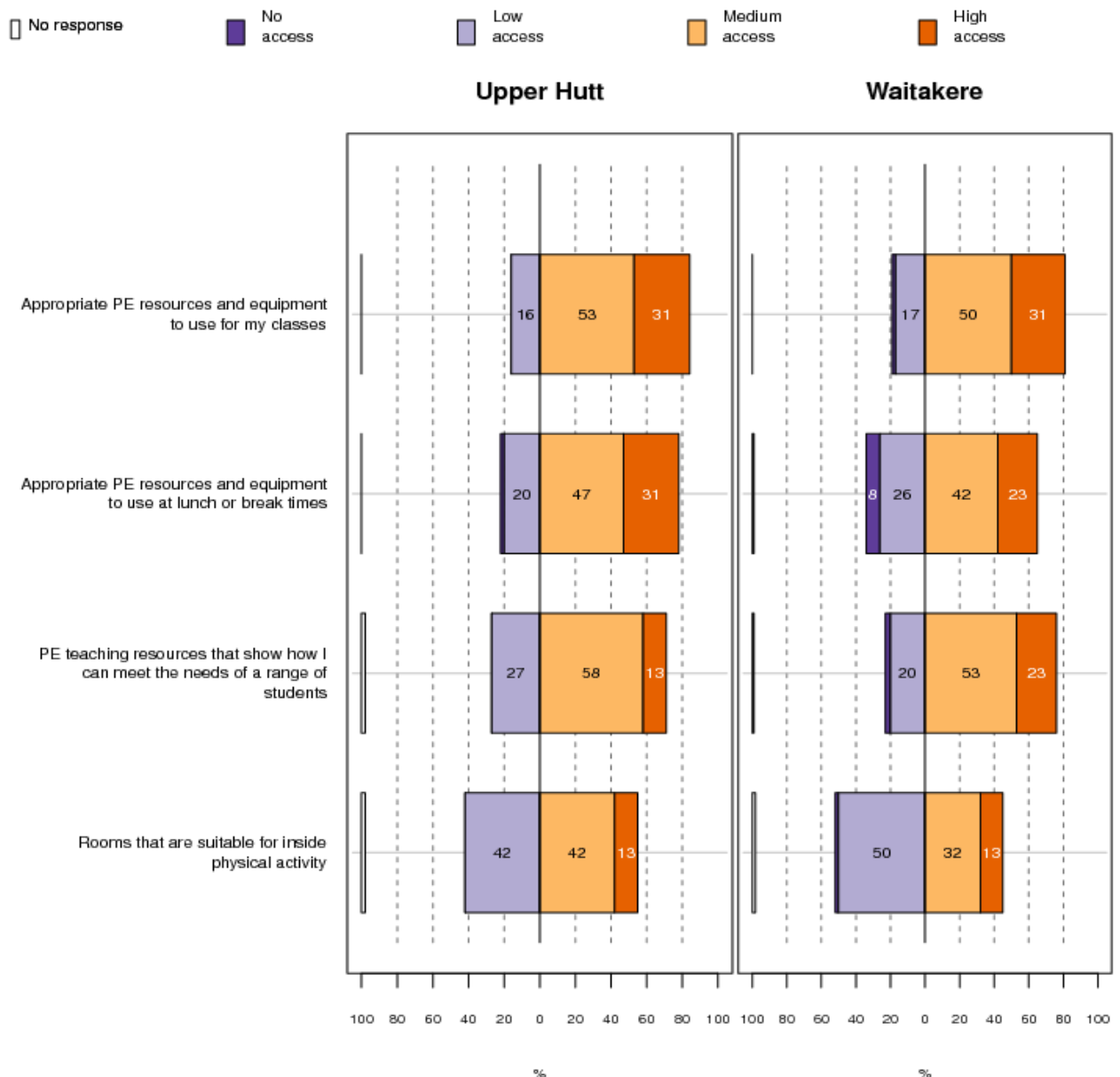
### **Indicator 1: Resources and PLD**

Indicators 1–3 explore HPE practice and PLD. This section includes graphs of responses to fixed-choice questions, as well as a summary of teacher and school leader views from an open-ended survey question about current barriers to offering a quality PE programme that reflects the New Zealand curriculum.

#### **Teachers have a need for assistance in planning HPE learning**

Figure 2 shows over **half of teachers report high or medium access to PE teaching resources** that show how to meet the needs of a range of students. Most also report they had access to resources and equipment to use for PE classes or at break times.

Figure 2 **Teacher access to teaching resources**



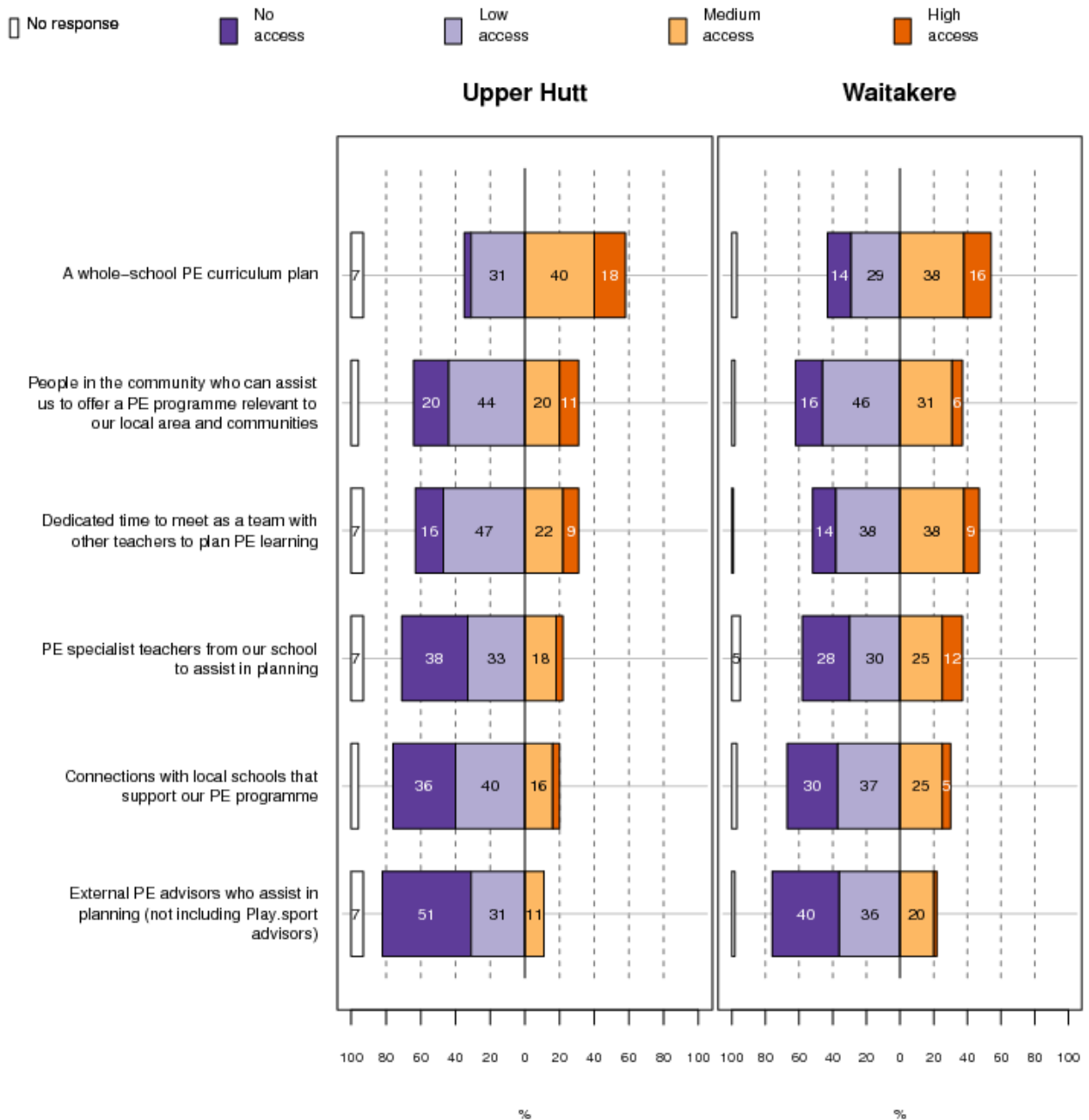
Although they had access to teaching resources, **teachers have some clear needs** for support with PE planning (see Figure 3). A third or more report **low or no access to a whole school PE curriculum plan** (36% Upper Hutt; 43% Waitakere). In addition, over half report **low or no access** to all the listed forms of planning support including:

- external PE advisors
- PE specialist teachers from their school
- time to meet as a team to plan PE learning.

... I find our school PE plan to be somewhat restrictive /prescriptive. The emphasis is on incremental learning of skills—an important part of PE but not the only. Health is an area that gets left out of the plan. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

Another potential need is for **stronger community connections** with two-thirds or more teachers reporting **low or no access** to connections with local schools to support PE or people in the local community who could assist in developing a localised programme.

Figure 3 **Teacher access to PE planning support**

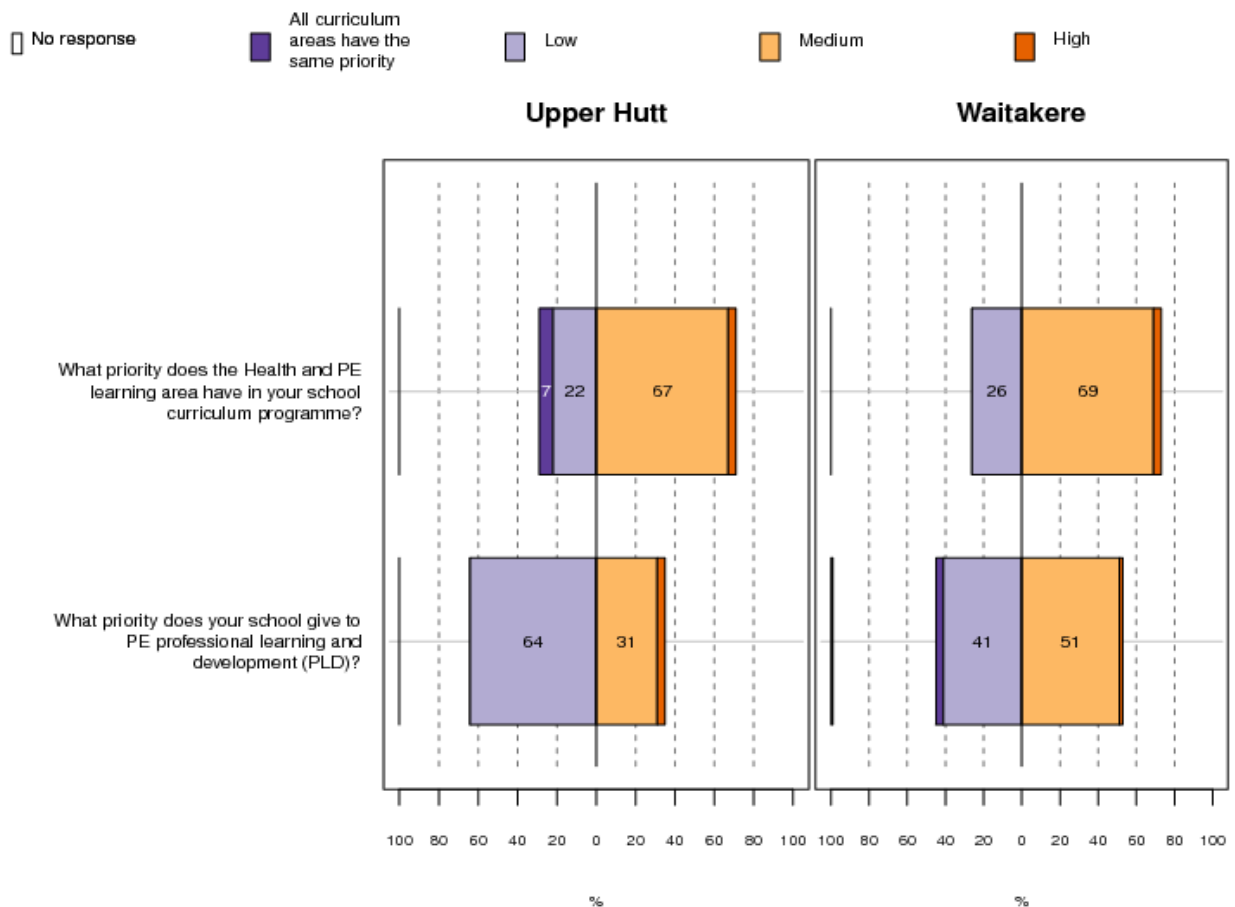


**The HPE learning area is not a high priority in primary schools**

Figure 4 suggests the **HPE learning area is not a high priority in schools**. For example:

- The majority of teachers report that the HPE learning area is of medium priority at their school. Only 4% of Upper Hutt and 4% of Waitakere teachers report this learning area is a high priority in their curriculum programme
- only 4% of Upper Hutt and 2% of Waitakere teachers report PE PLD is a high priority at their school.

Figure 4 **Teacher reports of HPE priority**



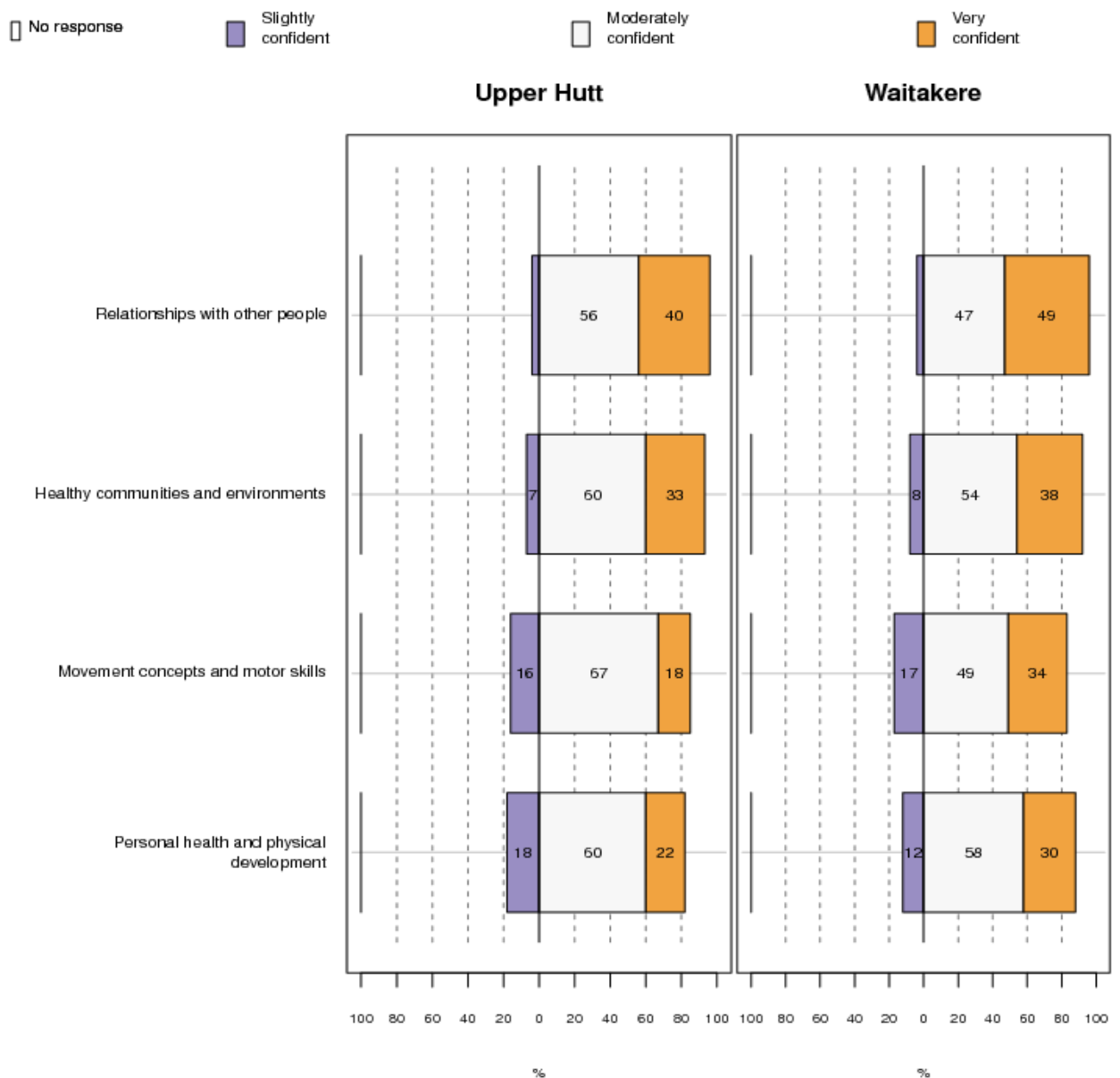
Reflecting the medium to low prioritisation of HPE, about **one-third of teachers report they have not accessed formal PLD or support for PE in the last 2 years** (31% Upper Hutt; 31% Waitakere). Of the two-thirds who had accessed PLD or support, the PLD was mostly run by staff from their school (36% Upper Hutt; 29% Waitakere) and RSTs (20% Upper Hutt; 23% Waitakere). Only 2–4% had accessed PLD provided via conferences or by school advisors. The support that teachers had accessed was from external providers (27% Upper Hutt; 19% Waitakere), and the local council (11% Upper Hutt; 5% Waitakere).

We want to help build teacher confidence – currently we are just rolling over things (in PE) without questioning this. (School, Upper Hutt)

## Indicator 2: Teacher confidence

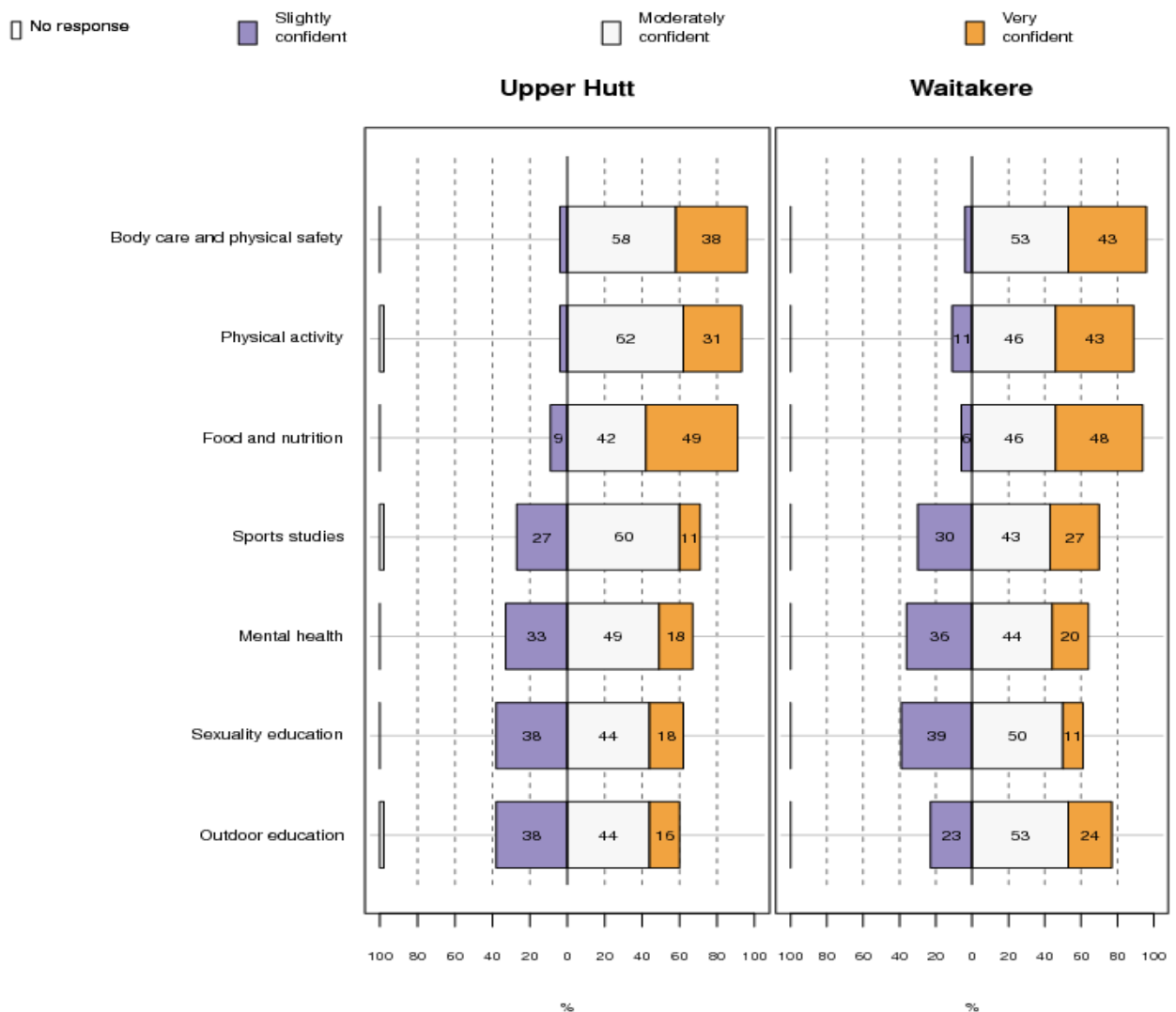
Teacher confidence varies depending on which of the four HPE strands they are teaching (see Figure 5). Teachers are most confident teaching *Relationships with other people* (40% of Upper Hutt and 49% of Waitakere teachers selected 'very confident'). They are less confident teaching the strand most strongly connected to PE, *Movement concepts and motor skills* (16% of Upper Hutt and 17% Waitakere teachers selected 'slightly confident'). More Waitakere than Upper Hutt teachers are 'very confident' with this strand.

Figure 5 Teacher confidence in the four Health and PE strands



Similarly teachers' confidence varies in relation to the 7 key focus areas of HPE (see Figure 6). Teachers are the most confident with *Food and nutrition* (49% of Upper Hutt and 48% Waitakere teachers selected 'very confident'). Teacher confidence varies in relation to the focus areas most related to PE. Most are 'moderately' or 'very' confident with *Physical activity* but over one-third of Upper Hutt teachers (38%) report they are only 'slightly confident' teaching *Outdoor education*. Waitakere teachers are more confident with this area. These variations give some indication of the areas in which teachers might benefit from additional support. As one example, some of the areas could be integrated with PE learning to support teachers to holistically address the HPE learning area.

Figure 6 Teacher confidence in the seven key learning areas of Health and PE



### Indicator 3: Quality PE provision

*Indicator 3: Quality PE provision*, explores six dimensions of quality PE practice (see Table 2 on p. 12 for a description). Some dimensions have parallel questions in the student survey. Key findings from the teacher section of the survey about quality PE teaching are presented below. Following this is a summary of key findings from the student survey.

#### Inclusive planning in PE

In terms of *Inclusive planning* (see Figure 7), the practices teachers show the **most agreement** with are focused on considering students' individual needs, for example:

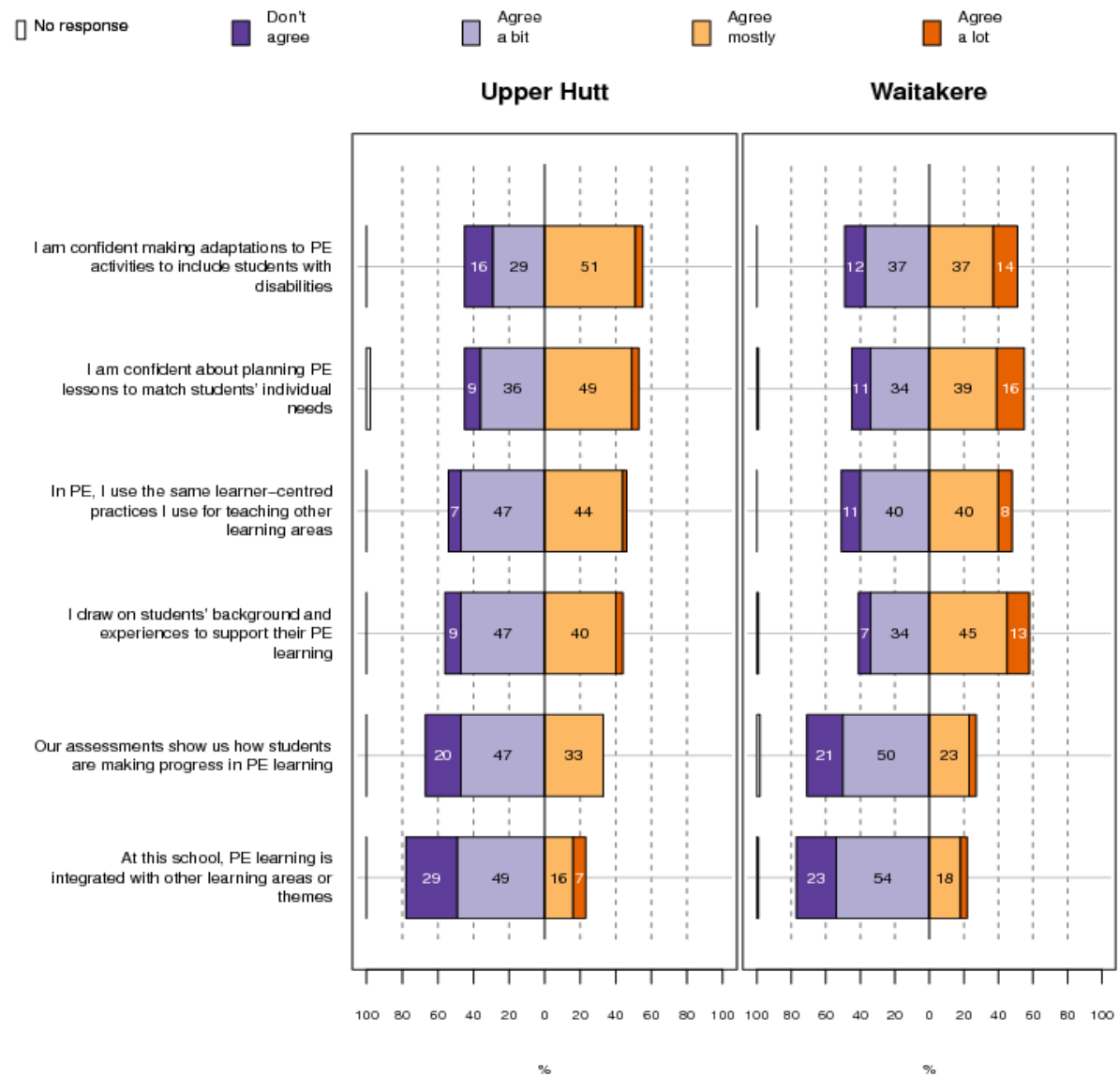
- I am confident about planning PE lessons to match students' individual needs (53% of Upper Hutt and 54% of Waitakere teachers agree 'a lot' or 'mostly')
- I am confident making adaptations to PE activities to include students with disabilities (56% of Upper Hutt and 51% of Waitakere teachers agree 'a lot' or 'mostly').



Teachers show **less agreement** with most of the other *Inclusive planning* statements, suggesting that **many practices are not fully embedded in PE teaching**. Teachers show the **least agreement** with:

- PE learning is integrated with other learning areas or themes (78% of Upper Hutt and 77% of Waitakere teachers 'disagree' or 'agree a bit')
- Our assessments show us how students are making progress in PE (67% of Upper Hutt and 71% of Waitakere teachers 'disagree' or 'agree a bit').

Figure 7 ***Inclusive planning in PE***



[I would like support about] integrated curriculum planning, authentic contexts relevant to the cultural backgrounds of our kids. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

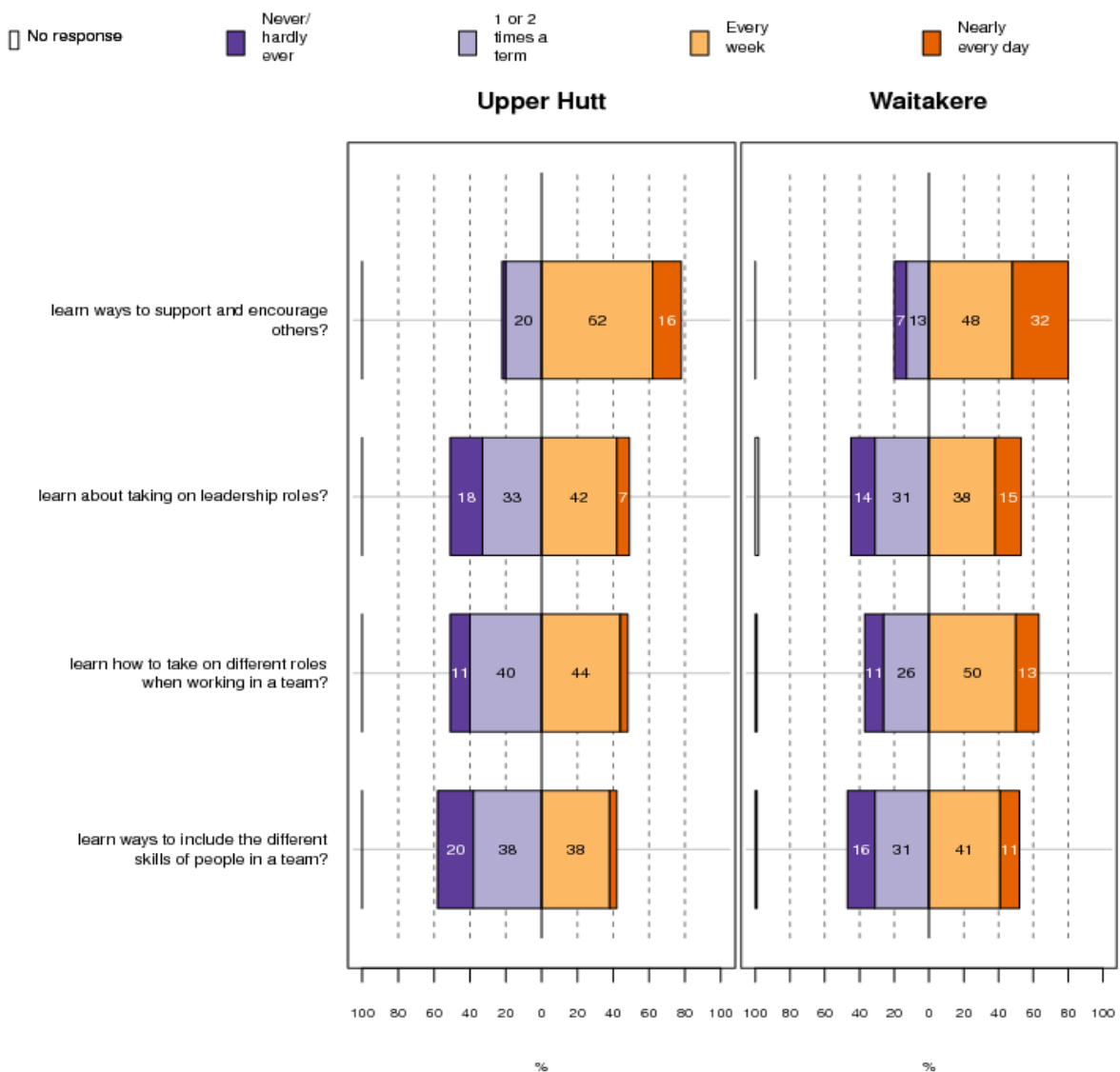
[I would like support about] how to create a programme that caters to differing ability levels. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

## Working together in PE

Teachers consider students have **frequent opportunities to learn how to support and encourage each other** (78% of Upper Hutt and 80% of Waitakere teachers report this happens weekly). Figure 8 suggests teachers consider students have **fewer opportunities to learn about more complex team behaviours** such as:

- taking on leadership roles (51% of Upper Hutt and 45% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).
- including the different skills of people in a team (58% of Upper Hutt and 47% of Waitakere teachers report this happens this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).

Figure 8 **Working together: How often do students in your classes...**



[Challenges to developing PE are] Time is always a factor...it's a scarce resource. Lack of knowledge is another. Admittedly I hadn't thought about the benefits of creating leaders and kids who are supportive of others. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

[I would like support] to have the time to focus on the different aspects of the curriculum (fair play, managing risks, problem solving). Generally our programme is focused on learning a skill or sport. (Teacher survey, Waitakere)

## Thinking in PE

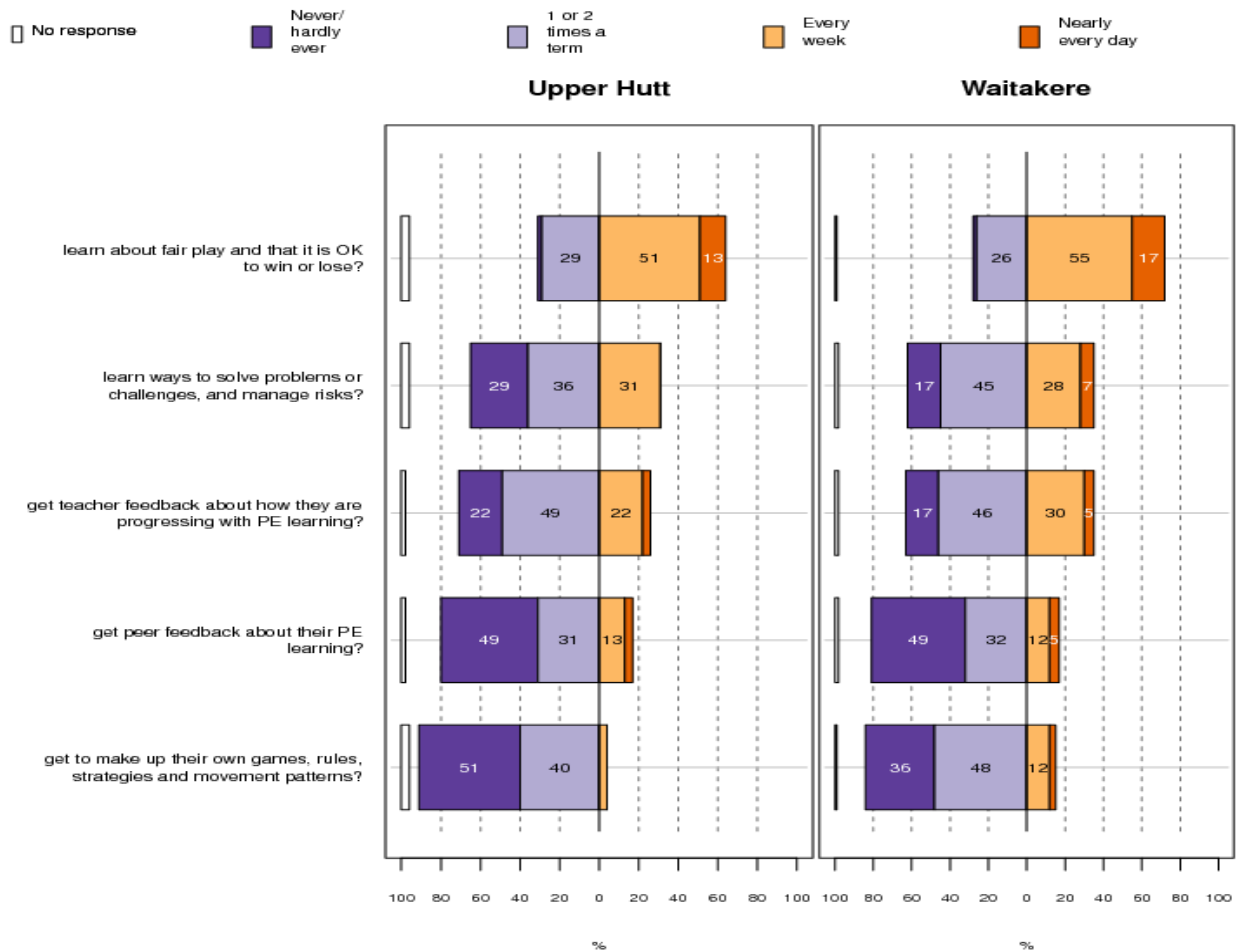
One main aspect of *Thinking in PE* (see Figure 9) that is covered in many schools is students having opportunities to learn about fair play and that it is OK to win or lose (64% of Upper Hutt and 71% of Waitakere teachers report this happens weekly). The majority of teachers report that many of the other *Thinking in PE* practices are less frequent. One set of less frequent practices are about fostering critical thinking:

- Students get to make up their own games, rules, strategies and movement patterns (91% of Upper Hutt and 83% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).
- Students learn ways to solve problems and challenges and manage risks (64% of Upper Hutt and 63% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).

Other less frequent practices are related to assessment and feedback:

- Students get teacher feedback about their progression with PE learning (71% of Upper Hutt and 64% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).
- Students get peer feedback about their PE learning (80% of Upper Hutt and 81% of Waitakere teachers report this happens this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).

Figure 9 *Thinking: How often do students in your classes...*

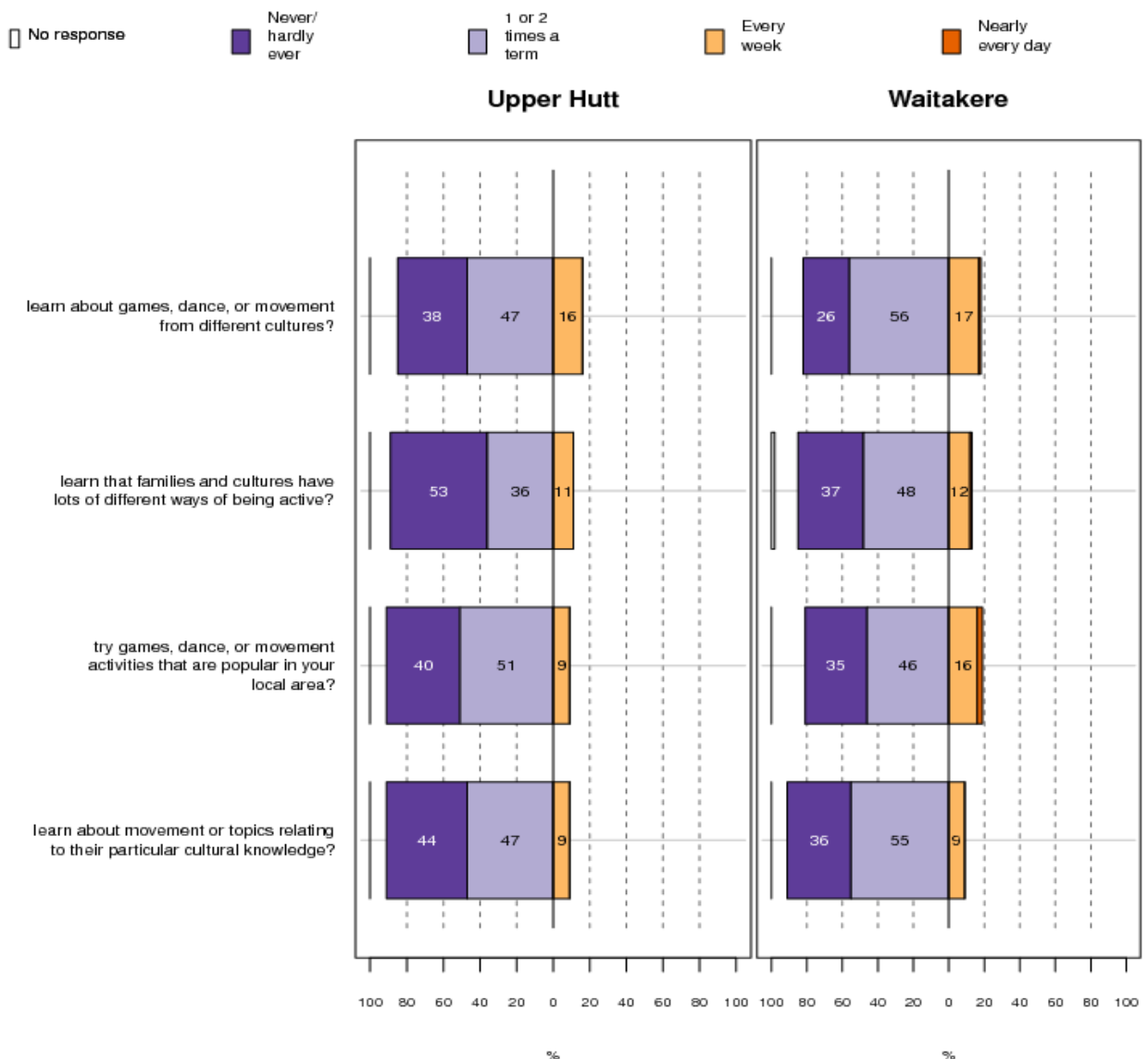


Similar findings are shown in the 2013 National Monitoring data for the HPE learning area (EARU & NZCER, 2015), suggesting that promoting *Thinking in PE*, including different forms of assessment, is an area in which teachers could benefit from support.

## Learning about our community in PE

Teachers report that all of the practices in the community section are less frequent (see Figure 10). For example, 84% of Upper Hutt and 82% of Waitakere teachers report that students have opportunities to learn about games, dance, or movement from different cultures '1 or 2 times a term' or less. Similar findings are shown in the 2013 National Monitoring data for the HPE learning area (EARU & NZCER, 2015). This data suggests that these practices could be a key area for support.

Figure 10 **Learning about our community: How often do students in your classes...**



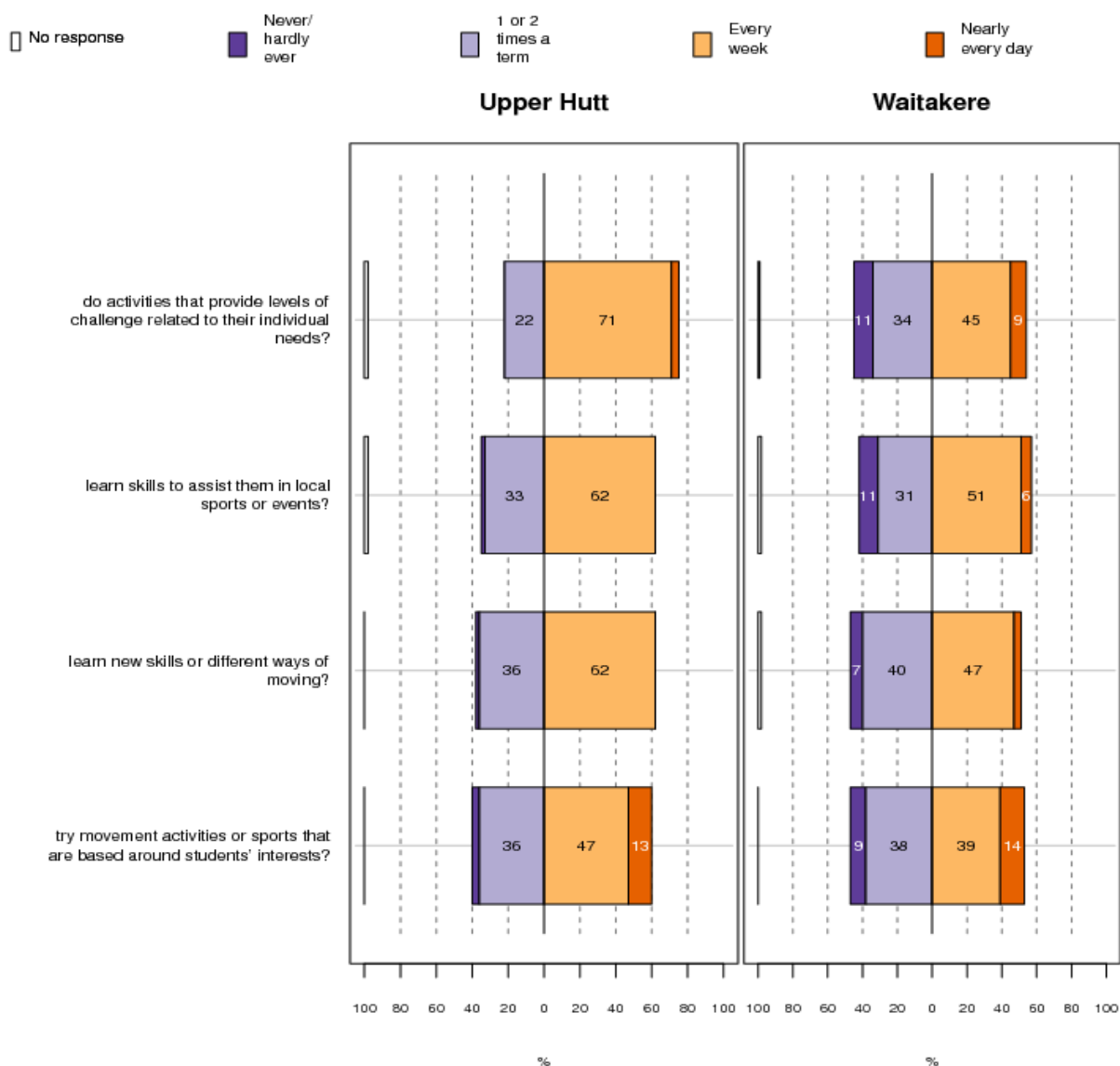
[I would like support about] how to cater for diversity in lesson planning, especially students' skills, backgrounds and cultures. (Teacher survey, Waitakere)

## Keeping active in PE

Overall around **half of teachers report that most of the *Keeping active in PE* practices happen weekly** (see Figure 11). However, there is a group of about one-third or more of teachers, particularly those from Waitakere, who think students have **few opportunities** to:

- learn new skills or different ways of moving (38% of Upper Hutt and 48% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less)
- do activities that provide levels of challenge relating to their needs (22% of Upper Hutt and 45% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less).

Figure 11 **Keeping active: How often do students in your classes...**



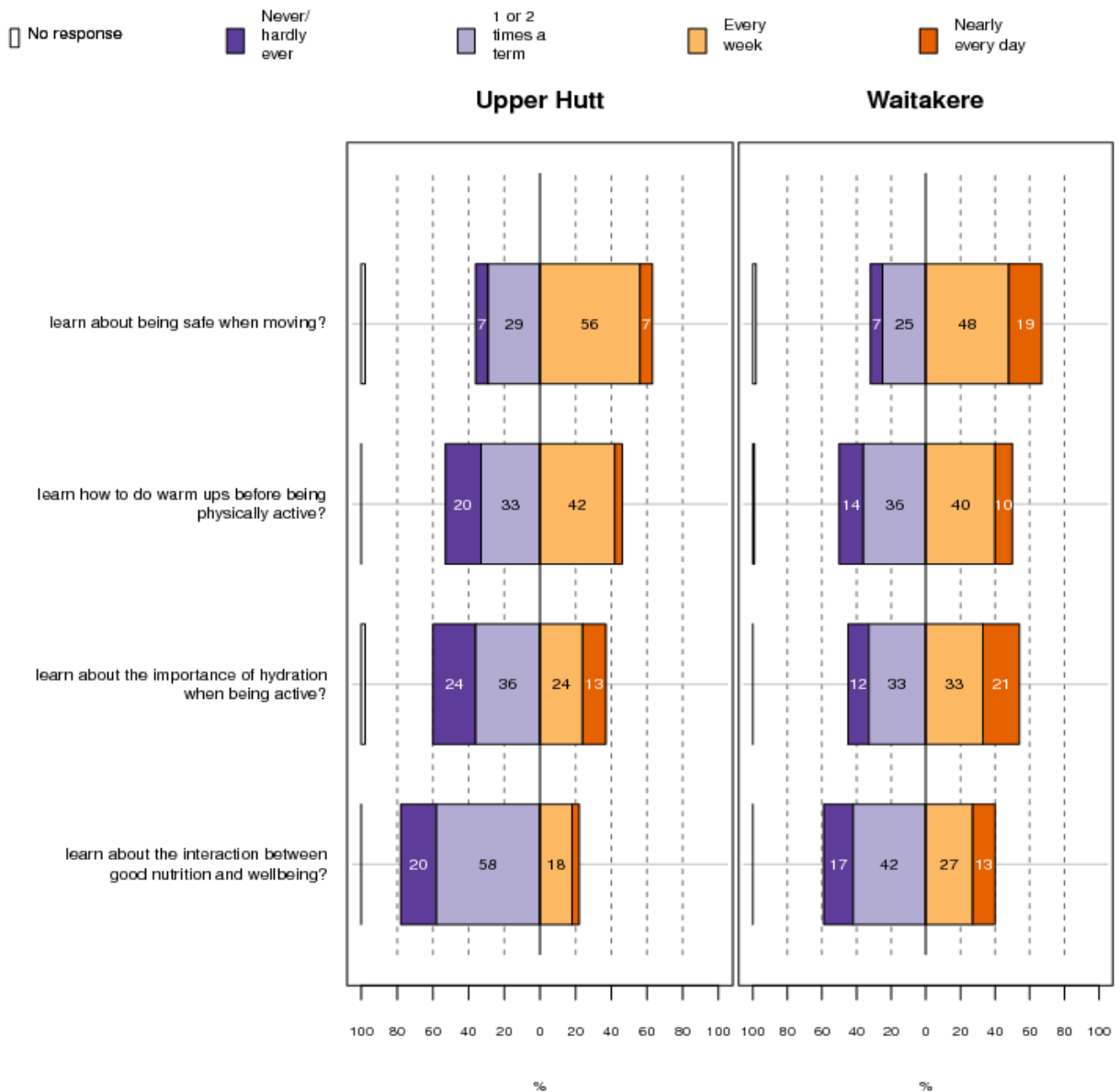
These findings are supported by information from school interviews. At a number of schools staff noted students often learnt the same skills each year, rather than progressing from the last year.

I would like to flip school approaches from ... in this term we are doing 'Danish rounders' to thinking about the skills we are building ... So at each level teachers can build on skills as they can guarantee that kids have been taught skills in lower year levels. (School, Upper Hutt)

## Keeping safe and healthy in PE

Teachers consider **students have frequent opportunities to learn about being safe when moving** (62% of Upper Hutt and 67% of Waitakere teachers report this happens weekly) (see Figure 12). Students have **less opportunity** to learn about other aspects of *Keeping safe and healthy in PE*, and in particular, learning about the interaction between good nutrition and wellbeing (78% of Upper Hutt and 60% of Waitakere teachers report this happens '1 or 2 times a term' or less). A focus on this interaction appears more common in Waitakere.

Figure 12 **Keeping safe and healthy: How often do students in your classes...**



## Teachers and students have similar views on PE practice

A key point summary of findings from the student data is presented below. The full set of data is reported in Boyd and Felgate (2016). A number of the dimensions of *Quality PE provision* had parallel questions in the student and teacher surveys.

## Key findings from the student survey about PE learning

The student data suggests the **strengths of both communities** in PE learning include:

- **A school culture that promotes learning about and through physical activity:** The majority of students agree they like doing PE ‘heaps’ or ‘quite a lot’ (81% Upper Hutt; 86% Waitakere), and consider PE offers ‘heaps’ or ‘quite a lot’ of opportunities to learn about concepts such as fair play and that it is OK to win or lose (84% Upper Hutt; 85% Waitakere).
- **Schools that promote health and wellbeing:** The majority of students have ‘heaps’ or ‘quite a lot’ of opportunities to learn about practices that supported their health and wellbeing at school, such as learning it is important to drink water when being active (85% Upper Hutt; 87% Waitakere).

The student data suggests the following **aspects of PE learning** could be enhanced. These practices include opportunities for students to:

- **make up their own active games, rules, or movement patterns** (60% of Upper Hutt and 56% of Waitakere students report this happens ‘a bit’ or ‘not at all’)
- **learn games, dance, or movement that are important to their family or culture** (59% of Upper Hutt and 52% of Waitakere students report this happens ‘a bit’ or ‘not at all’)
- **feel supported or encouraged to take part in physical activity in PE** (e.g., 48% of Upper Hutt and 44% of Waitakere students report people encourage them to be active at school ‘a bit’ or ‘not at all’)
- **experience more challenge in the PE activities they are able to do** (36% of Upper Hutt and 35% of Waitakere students report this happens ‘a bit’ or ‘not at all’).

Overall there is a **lot of similarity in the PE practices that students and teachers report are frequent or less frequent**. Practices that both groups report are less frequent are mostly located in the dimensions *Thinking in PE* and *Learning about our community in PE*. Another less frequent practice is learning about being a leader from the dimension *Working together in PE*.

*Keeping safe and healthy in PE* is one dimension in which teacher and student views differ. One example is that 38% of Upper Hutt and 55% of Waitakere teachers report students have weekly opportunities to learn about the importance of hydration when being active. In contrast, over 80% of students report they have ‘heaps’ or ‘quite a lot’ of opportunities to learn that it is important to drink water when being active.

## Schools identify a range of barriers to offering a quality PE programme

The data above on indicators 1–3 suggest there may be a number of barriers for primary and intermediate schools that could get in the way of offering a quality PE programme. More information on these barriers was provided during interviews with school staff at 14 schools, and from an open-ended question in the teacher survey, “*What are the main challenges for you in developing a PE programme that reflects the New Zealand*

*Curriculum?"* Responses to this survey question are shown below. The **major barrier** mentioned in the survey (and in interviews) was:

- **finding time for PE in the face of competing priorities** (51% Upper Hutt; 39% Waitakere). Many primary school staff were concerned how national standards had created a pressure to prioritise literacy and numeracy, which was contributing to the devaluing of PE and other learning areas such as the arts.

Time! It is so hard to fit reading, writing and maths into a day, ensuring each child's needs are catered for, let alone anything else in a consistent and comprehensive way. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

A second set of barriers relate to the knowledge and skills needed to plan effective learning. Schools identified a need for support with:

- **PLD and developing specialised knowledge or teacher confidence** (9% Upper Hutt; 12% Waitakere)
- **planning engaging lessons** to respond to students' cultures or individual needs (11% Upper Hutt; 12% Waitakere)
- **planning a meaningful HPE programme** (e.g., that was holistic or not just about fitness or sport) (11% Upper Hutt; 12% Waitakere).

We want PE that is not just about playing a game—more robustness about what PE is ... We seem to have lost a lot of the pedagogical learning and knowledge from 10 years ago with the thrust of national standards ... *(School, Waitakere)*

Hauora is still ranked as having a low priority in relation to "core" curriculum subjects and there is no encouragement or opportunity to use the well documented benefits of physical exercise in stimulating learning by being able to intersperse it with other subjects. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

PE is siloed—it's hugely disconnected. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

A third barrier was access to resources and spaces:

- access to **space and rooms**, particularly in wet weather (9% Upper Hutt; 11% Waitakere)
- access to **equipment and resources** (4% Upper Hutt; 12% Waitakere).

Access to indoor space, lack of quality equipment and enough quantity. Sourcing and organising equipment in a timely manner. Very little training on how to teach PE skills, end up doing existing programmes or relying on outside coaches for proper instruction. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

## A holistic vision for change in HPE

Indicators 1–3 explore HPE practice and access to PLD **prior to Play.sport**. We asked staff at the 14 schools we visited about their **longer-term vision** for quality PE learning at their school. Their replies suggest they want to find ways to work around the barriers mentioned above. Most visions include further development of teacher understanding about what a holistic or quality PE or HPE programme could look like, and the development of PLD approaches that could act to strengthen teacher pedagogy and confidence. Schools have different ideas about how this PLD could be organised. Some wanted to empower lead teachers or a group such as a syndicate to provide PLD to their peers, others saw the Play.sport workforce as the main providers of PLD. Many schools wanted more coherence in their PE programme to ensure students could build skills over time. Some wanted a more coherent system for planning across syndicates or more integration between HPE and other



learning areas. For some their vision for PE was focused around students developing physical skills, for others it was also related to supporting students to further develop competencies such as leadership, team work or thinking skills. A few school visions also emphasise fostering student engagement and belonging.

The biggest thing is building the confidence in teachers, helping them run sessions. And how to incorporate into their programme—covering all the aspects of PE and not just sport. So that it's not an 'extra'. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

We want HPE to be holistic—not just sports skills based. Physical skills are only a small part of HPE. Our school already does good skills teaching. We need to give students the skills to play together and listen to each other for all learning areas. *(School, Waitakere)*

#### Indicator 4: Quality external provision

The survey data shows a lot of variation in the use and value of external providers in PE (see Table 3). **Most teachers report that external providers are an infrequent part of PE learning** with the most common usage being 1 or 2 times a term for both Upper Hutt and Waitakere teachers. **However, use of providers also varies a lot between schools.** Some teachers report that over 40% of their PE programme is provided or supported by providers, while other schools report no use of providers for PE. Waitakere teachers report lower usage than Upper Hutt teachers. Teachers' views also show a lot of variation as to whether they consider provider programmes are aligned with the New Zealand curriculum.

Lots of outside people come and take things. Most are not integrated into PE. Through Play.sport we plan to reduce this use of external people. They are also costly—we could use the money elsewhere. There's not a lot of sustainability with these external people, teachers are not learning anything and the kids learn similar skills each year. For example, with hockey, kids learn to hold a hockey stick—but is that really important? *(School, Upper Hutt)*

Table 3 **Quality external provision**

<b>Amount of external provision</b>	<b>Upper Hutt N=45 %</b>	<b>Waitakere N=121 %</b>
<b><i>In PE, how often do students work with external providers?</i></b>		
Nearly every day	2	1
Every week	16	9
1 or 2 times a term	71	55
Never/hardly ever	11	36
<b><i>How much of your total PE programme is provided or supported by external sports providers?</i></b>		
None	9	21
1–20%	53	56
21–40%	22	17
41–60%	11	3
61% or more	4	3
<b><i>Quality external provision</i></b>		
<b><i>How aligned are providers' programmes to NZC?</i></b>		
Well aligned	11	19
Mostly aligned	56	31
Not very aligned	2	8
Varies a lot between providers	22	21
Do not use providers	7	19

The varied picture shown in Table 3 was evident in the interviews with school staff. Most described their use of external providers using terms such as “ad hoc” or “one off”. Staff saw the potential of providers to enhance their PE programmes but also identified a range of barriers to effective use including the cost of providers, their lack of alignment to the curriculum or school activities, and a lack of progression and learning for teachers and students in some provider programmes. Some commented on the demise of KiwiSport and the gap this was leaving but also expressed concerns that use of these providers could act against building teacher capability.

There are advantages in using that outside expertise. What concerns me is the lack of strong connection with overall planning—[providers] are often only available at short notice. Initially it was fine as there were only a few outside providers—for it to be effective it needs to go to a deeper level, and so that anything learned in a session can be continued. *(School, Waitakere)*

## Indicator 5: Participation

This indicator explores the amount of time allocated for students to participate in PE and physical activity, and the range of school opportunities for physical activity. Table 4 shows that the average amount of time spent on PE learning in a week reported by primary teachers is 66 minutes in Upper Hutt, and 50 minutes in Waitakere. Primary teachers also report spending similar amounts of time a week on fitness activities (51 minutes in Upper Hutt and 60 minutes in Waitakere). Around two-thirds report students did fitness activities nearly every day. **This focus on fitness suggests that schools potentially have more space in their programmes** that could be reoriented and used for HPE learning.

**Most teachers are involved in promoting physical activity at school** by organising or supporting at least one activity such as lunchtime or before school activity (78% Upper Hutt; 73% Waitakere). Of these teachers, around one-third (31% Upper Hutt; 33% Waitakere) support one activity, and the rest support two or more. The type of physical activity supported varies between the two communities. Upper Hutt teachers tend to support lunchtime or before-school activities and assist in organising active events such as Dance Splash or cross-country championships. In Waitakere fewer teachers report supporting these activities and more report coaching or managing a school sports team.

The majority of primary teachers from both communities report they **do not usually include physical activity as part of maths, writing, or science tasks** (78% of Upper Hutt and 74% Waitakere 'disagreed' or 'agreed a bit' with this statement). This suggests a possible focus in for the incorporation of physical activity.

Table 4 **Participation in PE and physical activity**

<b>Average minutes of PE learning per week</b>	<b>Upper Hutt N=45 minutes/%</b>	<b>Waitakere N=121 minutes/%</b>
Secondary ( <i>small numbers answered this question</i> )	180 mins	128 mins
Primary	66 mins	50 mins
<b><i>Fitness and physical activity</i></b>		
Primary: Average minutes spent on fitness activities per week	51 mins	60 mins
<b><i>As part of PE learning, students take part in fitness activities</i></b>		
Nearly every day	64	60
Every week	36	30
1 or 2 times a term	0	9
Never/hardly ever	0	1
<b><i>I include physical activity as part of maths, writing, or science tasks (Primary)</i></b>		
Agree a lot	0	5
Agree mostly	18	16
Agree a bit	42	48
Don't agree	36	26
<b><i>Teacher support for active culture (more than one answer possible)</i></b>		
	%	%
<b><i>This year I am involved in:</i></b>		
Organising or assisting with lunchtime or before-school physical activities	51	38
Organising active events such as Dance Splash or cross-country championships	36	15
Coaching or managing a school sports team	36	46
Organising active ways for students to get to school	9	8
Refereeing or volunteering at after-school or weekend school sport	4	12
Other involvement in school physical activity	20	25
<i>Total % who are involved in one or more activity</i>	<b>78</b>	<b>73</b>
<b><i>Being active is an important part of my life that I share with students</i></b>		
Agree a lot	18	31
Agree mostly	29	36
Agree a bit	47	27
Don't agree	7	6

## Student and teacher data shows similar messages about participation

The text box below summarises the key findings from the student survey on participation. Teacher and student views about the way physical activity is promoted at school are mostly

well aligned. Their responses suggest that schools promote a range of physical activities during the day or via events. Both sets of data also suggest possible areas of focus, such as supporting students to join clubs or integrating physical activity within learning areas such as literacy and numeracy.

### Key findings from the student survey about participation

In general the strengths and areas for enhancement, suggested by the student data are similar across the two communities. The **strengths of both communities** include:

- **A student culture that values physical activity:** Being active is important to the majority of students who engage in a range of physical activities at school and at home (e.g., 81% of Upper Hutt and 83% of Waitakere students agree 'heaps' or 'quite a lot' that being active is important to them)
- **A school culture that promotes physical activity:** Students consider their school to be fostering an active culture that mostly connects to their interests in physical activity (e.g., 82% of Upper Hutt and 85% of Waitakere students agree 'heaps' or 'quite a lot' that at school there are lots of different sports and active things to try out)
- **An environment that fosters formal participation in sports or active clubs:** The majority of students like being active and playing sport, with 79% of students from Upper Hutt and 74% from Waitakere being part of at least one sports team or active club in or outside school.

One of the two broad areas of practice the student data suggest could be enhanced is opportunities to **engage in PE and different forms of physical activity**. Although students consider their school to be promoting an active culture, their responses suggest they could benefit from more opportunities to be physically active at school within and outside of the learning programme. Enhancements could include more opportunities at school to:

- **engage in PE learning** (67% of Upper Hutt and 44% of Waitakere students did PE the day before)
- **have more input or choice** (e.g., 35% of Upper Hutt and 35% of Waitakere students thought having a say in which sports or games they would like at school happens 'a bit' or 'not at all').
- **formally participate in teams or clubs** (for the 21% of Upper Hutt and 26% of Waitakere students who are not a member of an active team or club in or outside school)
- **engage students who are least likely to enjoy being active** (15% of Upper Hutt and 11% of Waitakere students who reported liking active things a bit' or 'not at all')
- **experience physical activity integrated** within maths, writing, or science (60% of Upper Hutt and 54% of Waitakere students thought this happens 'a bit' or 'not at all').

### Some schools find it hard to make connections to support participation

During interviews school staff commented on the potential of connections with community groups to support students to experience new and varied opportunities for physical activity. Many wanted to make more or better use of community resources such as local sports clubs, sports associations, or RSTs. In both communities the extent of school connections

with these sports-related groups varied considerably. Some schools had many connections with clubs, whereas a school just down the road could have hardly any of these links. A few have potential resource people “over the road” but have not formed connections.

Barriers to using community resources and forming connections with clubs include the cost for students. One main tension for schools is balancing a desire to make connections to foster the talents of individual students but at the same time promoting inclusion for all. Some school leaders perceived clubs to be more focused on elite performance at the expense of inclusion.

There is an opportunity for clubs to come and do things with us (like after school). But they do not draw in kids who have not had that experience. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

It's the cost. The soccer club come in for sessions, but families can't afford to take it further by letting kids join the club. Families have cost and time issues if both parents work. *(School, Waitakere)*

Local knowledge was also identified as a barrier by some of the workforce and community stakeholders. This appears to be more of a concern in Waitakere, where communities are more spread out and teachers may not have local knowledge.

A problem highlighted by the activators (who are part of their local community, and have good established relationships) ... is they mapped out local opportunities around schools, and then they took a blank version of the map to schools and asked staff to identify what opportunities they knew of. In one school they only found two opportunities—that's when we found out that all teachers at that school don't live in the area ... So if a school's are not engaging with the community there are often reasons for it—it's not that the school doesn't want to, they may just not have the local intelligence. *(Stakeholder, Waitakere community)*

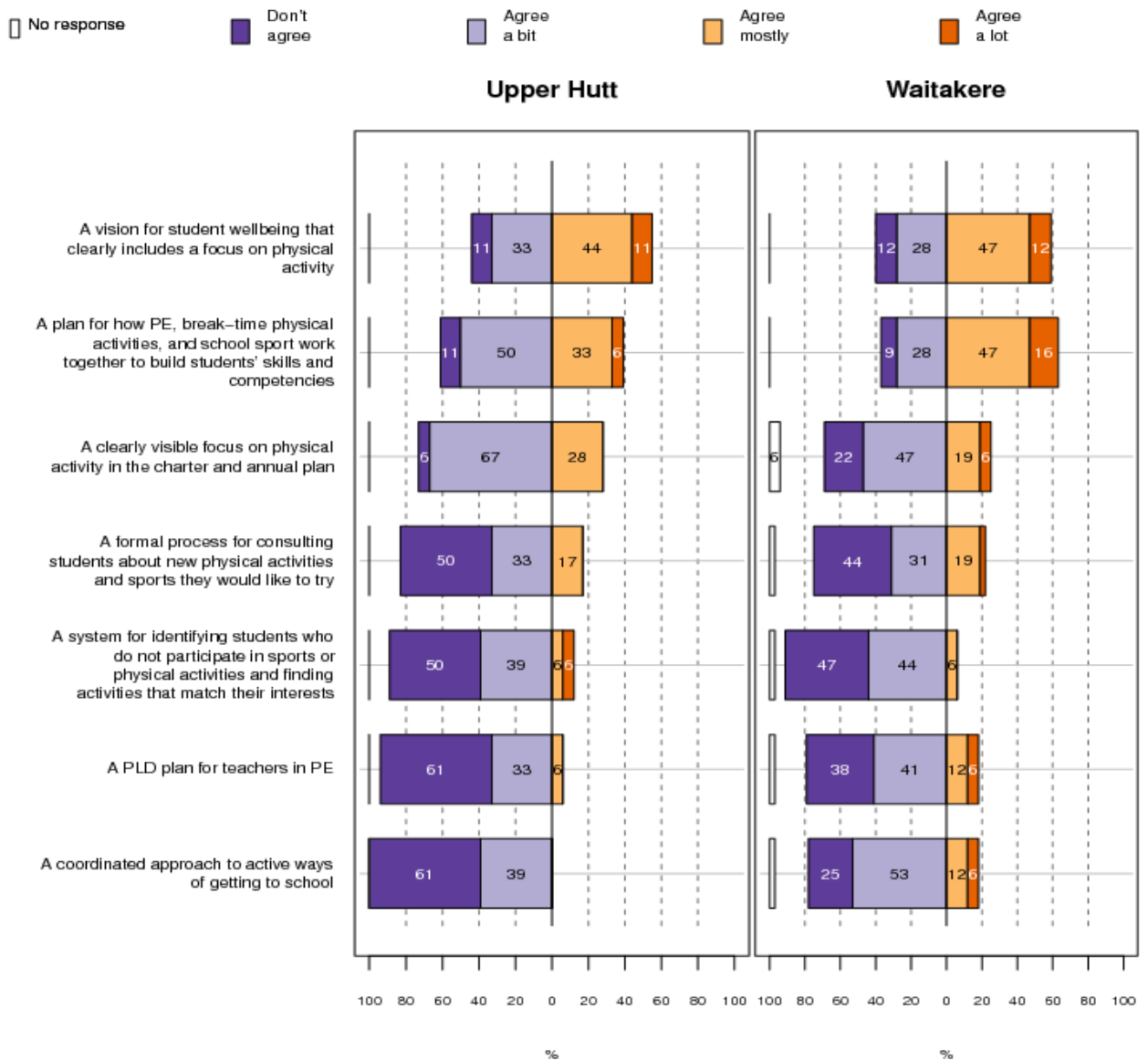
## Indicator 6: Active school culture

The section of the survey about school planning for an active culture had two sections—one for teachers (N = 166) and one for school leaders (N = 50).

### School leader views: An active culture is not formally planned

Most of the questions in the school culture section of the survey were aimed at school leaders. Only a few school leaders selected the response ‘Agree a lot’ suggesting that, **prior to Play.sport, most schools did not have formal planning mechanisms that supported PE, physical activity, or sport** such as school-wide charter goals or plans (see Figure 13). For example, only 6% of Waitakere and no Upper Hutt school leaders selected ‘Agree a lot’ when asked if they had a clearly visible focus on physical activity in their charter and annual plan. Many do not have a PE PLD plan for teachers (94% of Upper Hutt and 78% Waitakere leaders selected ‘Agree a bit’ or ‘Don't agree’). Many also do not have formal processes for consulting students about the activities they would like to try, or identifying students who are not involved in any form of physical activity.

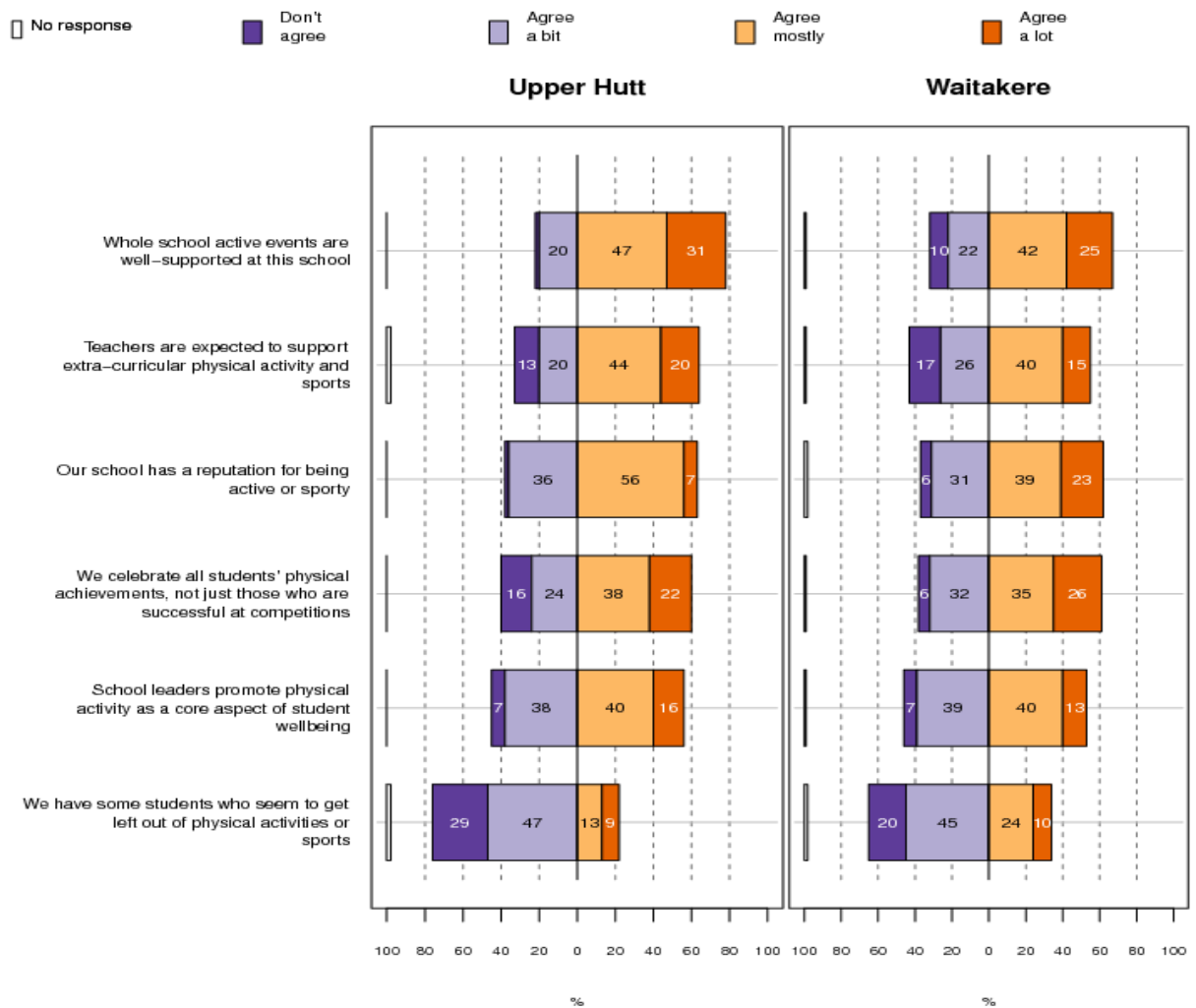
Figure 13 School leader views on an active school culture



### Teacher views: Some aspects of an active school culture are in place

A few questions in the school culture section were aimed at teachers. Like school leaders, teachers' responses to these questions suggest that an **active culture may not be not formally planned for or systematically promoted** at many schools (see Figure 14). For example about half of teachers agreed 'a lot' or 'mostly' that school leaders promote physical activity as a core aspect of student wellbeing (56% Upper Hutt; 53% Waitakere). Although schools may not have a formally planned approach, **the majority of schools have some aspects of an active culture in place**. For example, around two-thirds of teachers agreed 'a lot' or 'mostly' that their school has a reputation for being active or sporty (62% Upper Hutt; 62% Waitakere) and that whole school active events are well-supported at their school (78% Upper Hutt; 67% Waitakere).

Figure 14 Teacher views on an active school culture



### Schools have a vision for an active culture that promotes inclusion

We asked staff at the 14 schools we visited about their longer-term vision for an active school culture. Most noted that many, but not all, students were already active. The most **commonly shared vision was about building a more inclusive focus** that gave all students access to experiences likely to foster their interest in being active. For some schools it was important that students could access free opportunities, activities at lunch times, or join team or clubs. Some wanted to offer a wider range of experiences to all students while also offering their already skilled students more opportunities to build on their interests.

Only a few mentioned goals relating to physical activity in their charter or school plan. However most wanted to develop a **more coherent and planned approach** to physical activity. Schools' visions for coherence took a range of forms. Most schools wanted to plan physical activity opportunities to ensure they built students' confidence and competencies such as relating to others. Some wanted more integration of current sport or physical activity opportunities with the school PE programme, others wanted more physical activity integrated within all learning areas, and some wanted more connection between current



physical activity and school values or foci (such as a focus on student leadership). Most wanted to create more meaningful and planned links to community resources, contexts, or providers to support their vision.

The kids are active anyway. There's lots of different activities. Our vision is to create this in a deliberate way—we want to build resilience in a deliberate way. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

We would like to make activity the norm—that it is part of normal learning and part of all curriculum areas. We want more organised activity at lunch with student monitors ... But it is inclusive, everyone can play, even kids you would not think would be interested. We are bringing in key competencies as well. *(School, Waitakere)*

## Play.sport could offer schools needed PLD and support

The baseline data about indicators 1–6 summarised above suggests areas where schools could benefit from support. We also asked teachers and school leaders what support they were hoping to get from Play.sport. Perspectives on potential support came from three main sources of data:

- A question in the teacher section of the staff survey: *“What are the main forms of PLD or support you would like to assist you with PE teaching and learning?”*
- A question in the leader section of the survey: *“What are the main forms of support that could assist your school to strengthen your focus on quality PE, physical activity and sport?”*
- Interview data from school staff from 14 schools including responses to the questions *“Why was your school interested in Play.sport? What did you want to change or improve?”* and *“How do you see Play.sport helping you work towards your vision for PE/for an active school culture?”*

School leaders and teachers have a wide range of support needs that could assist them to realise their visions for their school. These needs varied between teachers and schools. The main area of support mentioned by teachers who responded to the survey were **ideas for lessons or activities that enabled teachers to better engage students and meet their needs**, including ways to:

- **match needs** (e.g., were differentiated, age-appropriate, or offered progression up year levels or from skills to games) (27% Upper Hutt; 17% Waitakere)
- **enable all to participate** (e.g., engaging, inclusive, or offer student agency) (20% Upper Hutt; 16% Waitakere)
- **help teach skills, games, or sports** (18% Upper Hutt; 8% Waitakere)

Ideas, games appropriate for 5 year olds that don't take ages to set up. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

Involving the non-sporty students who always stay at the fringes of games. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

- offer ideas for **quick and fun physical activity or warm ups** (8% Upper Hutt; 5% Waitakere)

Fun skills lessons to cater for a range of skills and engagement levels across a range of areas (small/large balls, running, athletics, gymnastics, swimming). Goals in children's speak in progressions to link in with student agency and engagement. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

The second main area was **more PLD:**

- for staff** (e.g., expert modelling, help to build a quality PE programme or teacher confidence) (11% Upper Hutt; 13% Waitakere)

Modelling and coaching for teachers. *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

The third main area was more **support with planning** including:

- planning that supports integration** (e.g., with learning other areas, the key competences, or inquiry topics) (9% Upper Hutt; 14% Waitakere)
- planning in general or for a rounded curriculum** (e.g., including more health) (9% Upper Hutt; 12% Waitakere)
- school-wide or team planning** (e.g., a revised PE implementation plan) (4% Upper Hutt; 5% Waitakere).

Providing staff with support and ideas to deliver effective PE lessons and help staff to have a clear understanding of the difference between PE and Sport, what quality versions of these looks like. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

Better cross-curricula links - how do we bring P.E Teaching and learning into the classroom more and not just a standalone 'outdoors' session once or twice a week? *(Teacher survey, Waitakere)*

Planning and coverage of all areas in the Health & PE curriculum. *(Teacher survey, Upper Hutt)*

Around 2–4% of teachers also made comments about other forms of support such as activities that connected with students' cultures, ways of accessing equipment and resources, support with assessment, how to fit PE into the school day, and ways to improve connections with community or sports providers.

Overall, teachers' responses to this question show that **many appear to place more priority on the physical skills aspect of PE**, than on other aspects such as social skills or critical thinking and action.

The 50 school leaders desired similar forms of support to teachers, but were more focused on **whole-school PLD and planning, and connections with community providers**. The main support needs they mentioned were:

- PLD for teachers relating to quality PE
- assistance with school-wide or team planning
- improved connections to community and sports providers
- lessons design to match student needs or to enable all to participate
- ways to promote the wellbeing benefits of activity to the wider community.

Professional Development for teachers on planning and implementing quality PE sessions. Coaching for teachers. *(Leader survey section, Upper Hutt)*

Support for teachers who are not confident in teaching physical activity. Understanding of the PE curriculum. Support with coaching. Promoting coaching and being involved in extra-curricular activities outside of the classroom. Assessment. Making PE enjoyable for all (even those who are not as physically active as others). *(Leader survey section, Waitakere)*

Helping teachers understand the value of PE and that it is just as important as the other subjects as we do, although Literacy and Numeracy gets more attention. Different games that can be incorporated in the daily/weekly plans that can make PE an enjoyable event for all students. Help creativity! (*Leader survey section, Upper Hutt*)

We have become too risk averse. Also PE is not taught at Teachers' College. They only do about one day ... Teachers are not getting enough training ... We were wanting to teach better PE. But what does this look like? [Play.sport] is an opportunity to say—hey we are going to look at PE and work collaboratively. (*School, Waitakere*)

## Summarising the baseline data and looking to the future

The survey data shows that schools are promoting an active culture and this culture is valued by the majority of students. The data also shows that schools have a broad range of needs or areas they would like to develop through Play.sport to achieve their visions for: school-wide coherence in how physical activity is promoted and planned for; PLD for teachers; and competency development and inclusion for students. School staff identify substantial barriers that could be worked through to assist them to achieve their visions. Aspects of the education and sport systems that influence schools are not always acting to support schools to offer quality PE and physical activity, or sport experiences. One main barrier is the lower priority of the HPE curriculum and PLD compared to other learning areas. Another barrier is access to community resources and external providers who align with school visions.

Overall, **schools' needs for support are well aligned with the focus areas of Play.sport**. The main needs suggested by the baseline data include support to further:

- develop a strategic school vision in relation to physical activity and sport that is focused around inclusion, engagement, and the development of student competencies.
- shift thinking from a physical skills or sport-based approach to PE, towards approaches that foster the holistic development of student competencies in ways that align with the New Zealand curriculum.
- develop a clear view of what quality PE looks like and an integrated (with health and other learning areas) HPE plan that reflects this view along with the New Zealand curriculum.
- build teacher confidence and access to PLD that addresses the dimensions of quality PE that are less common in schools such as practices in the two dimensions *Thinking in PE* and *Learning about our community*.
- address the current ad hoc use of external providers and community connections by rationalising and strengthening these connections so they align with school visions about student inclusion, engagement, and competency development.



### 3. The Play.sport model: On your marks, get set, go

This section of the report explores the set-up year of Play.sport in 2016. This section draws on data from interviews with 27 school staff at 14 schools, 16 member of the Play.sport workforce, and seven national and community stakeholders. In this section we focus on how Play.sport as a model has been experienced by these different groups of stakeholders. We also explore the factors that have supported or hindered ‘buy in’ from schools and teachers, how the workforce is operating, consistency of messages and alignment across the system, and suggested areas to develop in 2017.

#### Gaining buy-in for a new way of working

Play.sport is an emergent initiative that starts from school contexts and needs, rather than being a defined programme that is implemented across all schools in the same way. This complex and multi-dimensional approach aims to shift understandings about physical activity, sport and PE, including challenging the notion that “PE is sport”. It is a new way for Sport NZ to work with schools, moving from a model based on provision (such as the KiwiSport approach) to a model of advising and empowering.

The model is very deliberately school-led. It has to be driven by the school’s agenda, planning, and needs, which is tricky if they don’t know what their needs are. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

There is a challenge in getting schools to understand this philosophy. It’s a behaviour change model. You’re challenging some long held ideas, their understanding of the curriculum, their planning, and their delivery of it. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

Progress across the two communities has been variable, and all schools are at a different stage of engagement with the Play.sport workforce. This variability was evident in the 14 schools we visited. This section first discusses why schools signed up to Play.sport, which can be an important factor in how they then experience it, their level of commitment, and expectations. It then considers those factors that have supported or challenged ‘buy in’ from schools.

#### Schools signed up to Play.sport for varied reasons

Schools had varied reasons why they had got involved with Play.sport. Of the eight schools we visited in Waitakere, five of them referred to their Community of Learning (CoL) as a factor in their involvement in Play.sport. Some would not have been active in joining were it

not for the CoL. Although schools mostly now see the value of Play.sport, joining Play.sport due to CoL membership had created buy-in issues for a couple of schools in Waitakere.

In Upper Hutt, where an existing cluster of schools were participating in Play.sport, this buy-in seemed to be less of a concern. Only two schools (of six) directly referred to their cluster as a factor in their Play.sport involvement.

Play.sport didn't attract me at first at all, but we have joined a CoL and other schools were interested. I went along on the wave. *(School, Waitakere)*

Another common reason for school interest in Play.sport was a desire to **improve PE teaching** and give more attention to this curriculum area.

It offered a team of people who could come and help us enhance our PE programme. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

Other reasons a few schools gave for being interested in Play.sport were:

- the attraction of **the flexible, emergent model** (mostly Upper Hutt schools)
- to support their existing **focus on sport**
- Play.sport's perceived fit with their **school values and expectations**
- the opportunity to focus on PE **across different schools** i.e., between primary, intermediate, and secondary.

The philosophy that sits behind it. Not one size fits all, not a predetermined packaged. That really resonated. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

Play.sport very much fits our expectations of what is important for primary-aged learners in terms of PE and sport. Being involved in as much physical activity as possible. *(School, Waitakere)*

Although their stage of development and involvement with Play.sport varied (see below), nearly all schools we visited saw the potential of Play.sport and were "on board".

## Schools are at different stages of engaging with the Play.sport model

The Play.sport model is emergent in that support is provided in response to school needs. The first year focused on: recruiting the Play.sport workforce; building relationships with principals and lead teachers; undertaking a scoping phase in schools to ensure the workforce understands school contexts and needs; and planning for 2017 to reflect these needs. This planning was only occurring in some schools by Term 4.

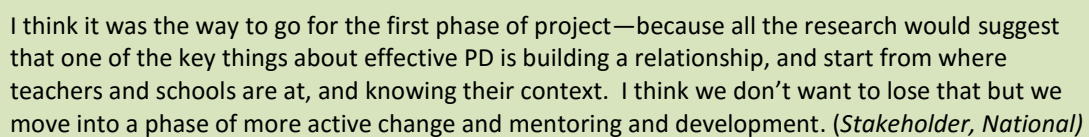
The model is predicated on relationships that individuals have built. We need to be thinking ahead and planning for when people might leave. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

As with other aspects of Play.sport, relationships between the workforce and schools are at different stages as shown by an analysis done by Play.sport managers on school engagement early in Term 4. In Upper Hutt, the workforce team had high or medium engagement with 12 of the original 16 schools (five were rated as high and seven as medium engagement). The workforce noted that one school was emerging as a lead school. The team were still building relationships with four schools.

A similar analysis of the Waitakere schools shows high or medium engagement with half (14) of the 28 schools. Engagement varied between clusters, and types of schools. Many of the secondary schools were at the early stages of engagement.

**The level of school engagement with Play.sport was strongly related to the extent they valued the emergent model and the focus of Play.sport.** The schools we visited could be placed on a continuum (see Figure 15) from a small number that were dissatisfied with the model and lack of action (e.g., one school had expectations about a “programme” and was frustrated that this was not being delivered), to schools that accepted the slow start, to those who embraced the emergent model and saw it as a strength of Play.sport. A few other stakeholders (outside of schools) have also been frustrated by the slow start, but understand some of the reasons why it has been this way such as the need for the workforce to develop an understanding of their role, and a slow appointment process in some cases (e.g., it has taken a long time to appoint an activator in Upper Hutt, because the contract for funding took time, and the focus has been on getting the right person for the job).

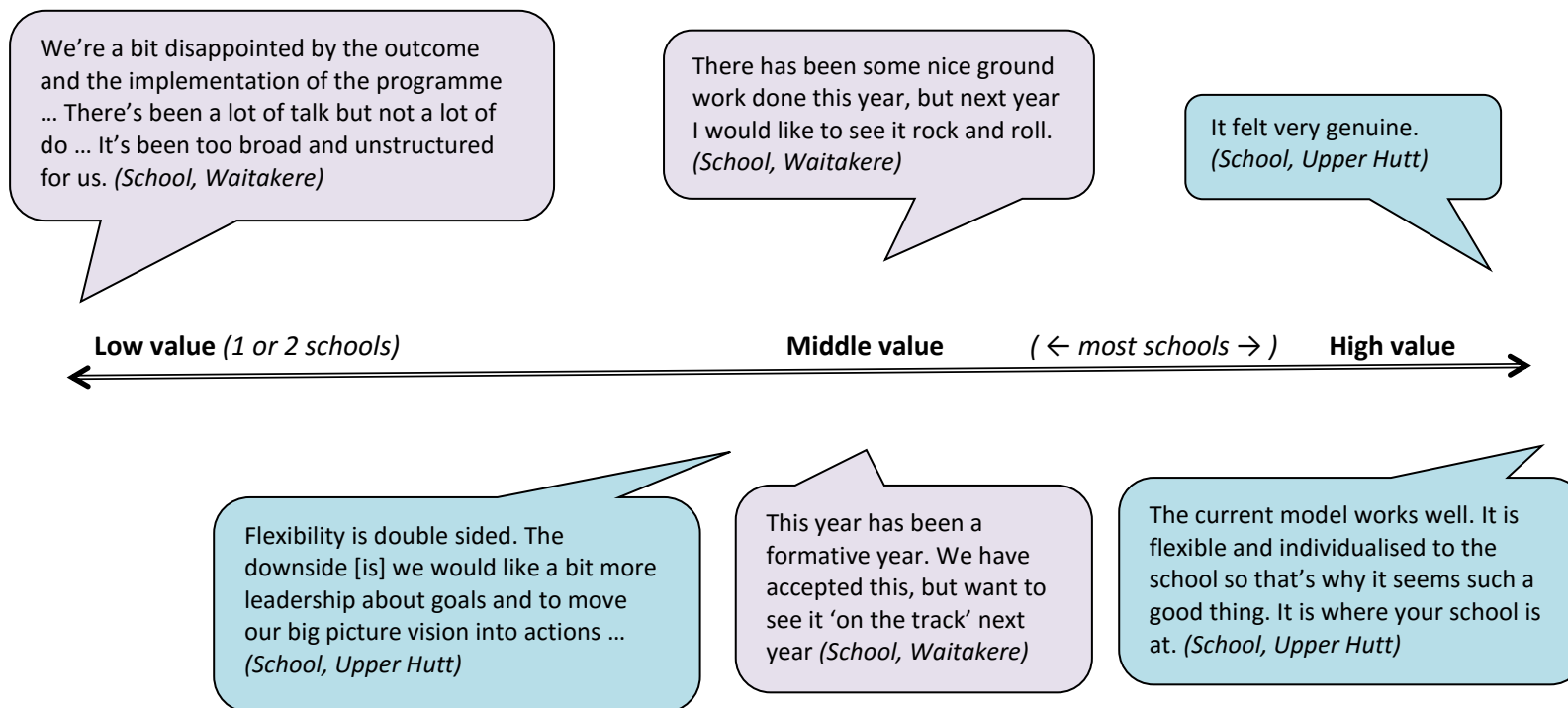
On the whole education-related stakeholders who work with schools see the relationship building processes to rest on good practice PLD principles. Like schools, stakeholders are ready for some more focused action in 2017.



I think it was the way to go for the first phase of project—because all the research would suggest that one of the key things about effective PD is building a relationship, and start from where teachers and schools are at, and knowing their context. I think we don’t want to lose that but we move into a phase of more active change and mentoring and development. *(Stakeholder, National)*

One risk of this relationships-based model is succession planning, if people move on or workflows need to be adjusted within teams.

Figure 15 School perceptions of the Play.sport model





## Taking time to build relationships has laid a foundation for change

Nearly all schools appreciated the ways in which the Play.sport workforce had built relationships within a school. The workforce also valued this relationship building phase and considered it an important part of the Play.sport approach. One strategy the workforce used to build relationships, and understand school contexts and needs, was to get involved in all aspects of school life, as summarised by the Upper Hutt mentors:

We take reading groups, we've been on trips to the museum, we've taken their sports teams. We go to interschool events, refereeing, sausage sizzles. That's been our foot in the door. Anything that we can be part of, that has really helped formed those relationships with staff. We're not a visitor, we're part of the school community now. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

Schools valued the workforce "getting alongside", understanding how the school worked, becoming part of the school community, and being responsive.

[Play.sport team member] came on a school trip. They are very willing to come and help out, they want to be a part of our school, they, want to be involved. *(School, Waitakere)*

## All stakeholders are ready for some more focused action

Schools were in different stages of planning for 2017. All interviewees (schools, workforce and national and community stakeholder) agreed that 2017 needed to be the year of action, and some schools were now able to articulate what they would be focusing on. We give two examples here.

We sat down and came up with a plan and what we need. Our focus is to build team and relationship skills in Year 1 and 2. *(School, Waitakere)*

The next step is with a core group of teachers we call 'Team Hauora', to work with Play.sport to get our dreams underway. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

The structure of implementation will be different in different schools, and the workforce leaders are mindful of the challenge of managing workflows and workloads. Some of the workforce had concerns about the number of schools they were working with.

We could be in a bit of strife next year when all 16 schools hit the go button! The phasing of planning implementation will be challenging, we may need to be strategic. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

## School-wide buy-in has not yet been established in many schools

In most schools, **communication had mostly been with school leaders, either the principal or a delegated member of staff.** The workforce reflected that the best way to start a relationship with a school was to attend a whole staff meeting. This had happened in many, but not all schools. In secondary schools, a particular feature of the context is how to share and spread the initiative beyond PE teachers.

In some primary and intermediate schools, Play.sport involvement included contributing to a number of whole school staff meetings and working with syndicate leaders. It was less common for classroom teachers to have been directly involved in individual PLD or planning at this stage, although processes for working directly with teachers had started at a few schools.

On reflection it was much harder to get in and build relationships without the initial staff meeting because the school as a whole didn't know who we were. (Workforce, Waitakere)

It's still a narrow wedge into school life. The whole school has been introduced through meetings ... [but] direct intervention has been with a limited number of teachers. The direct relationship needs to spread. (School, Waitakere)

As Play.sport moves into the action stage in schools in 2017, getting "buy-in" from classroom teachers will be an important focus. Mentors and facilitators are already mindful of this and considering strategies for encouraging and supporting less confident or reluctant teachers (see next section). Those in activator roles are also aware of needing to make links across a school.

We are working with sports coordinators. But what about other teachers? We might not be connecting with all the relevant people, for example, someone else might be in charge of student leadership, or with making links with the community. (Workforce, Waitakere)

## Strategies are needed to engage harder-to-reach teachers or schools

In 2016 the main focus has been on building relationships with schools. This strong foundation will support the way that the workforce work with more reluctant or less confident teachers in schools. This was identified as a future challenge by some school staff and the workforce.

Next year is crunch year... A challenge for them next year—getting the reluctant teachers—how to get on board working with them. Play.sport will need some strategies for that. Those who don't think they need any help or say they're too busy. Working at syndicate level should help with that. (School, Upper Hutt)

As discussed earlier, a central approach to working with more reluctant schools has seen workforce "worming our way in" in subtle ways such as being an extra pair of hands at athletics day, "dropping seeds", and "finding little ways" to provide support. These things will continue to be important in 2017 in those schools that are not so far along their Play.sport journey. A few members of the workforce did ponder whether all schools would stay committed to the initiative. One particular challenge was schools where the workforce did not consider they had the "right" contact person. The contact could be a principal who was reluctant or too busy, or a staff member who had been delegated Play.sport responsibility but had not been "empowered" to make decisions and get engagement across the wider school. Another challenge was shifting beliefs and moving some schools away from a traditional PE programme driven by the inter-school sports day calendar.

The following strategies for engaging schools (beyond those relationship building strategies already discussed) were suggested. Use depends on what might work at each school.

- Attending whole school staff meetings to explain roles to all staff, and run activities that enable all to participate in developing a vision for the future. There's not one thing that's working outright. (*Workforce, Waitakere*)
- Being flexible, responsive, and creative to offer ideas that have a good fit with school needs. Finding schools brave enough so we can have some positive case studies. (*Workforce, Waitakere*)
- Harnessing "early adopter" schools to share practice through use of case studies, or "beacon schools" that other schools could visit.
- Building processes for sharing practice between schools via workshops for principals and teachers so "early adopter" schools can share their interest and ideas with others. [Collaboration using] principals who are starting to tell the story and who say 'it's working well for us'. (*Workforce, Upper Hutt*)

### *Engaging with reluctant teachers and shifting mindsets*

The workforce and school leaders identified the workforce also need strategies for engaging with less confident or reluctant teachers. One aspect of this engagement is working to shift the mindset of teachers whose PE practice is not well aligned with the curriculum.

PD is where you get your depth and capacity and build confidence of teachers to take such [PE] activities. You'll get that pushback from teachers especially those that don't understand or there isn't the clarity about the intention. (*School, Waitakere*)

Suggested and current strategies for working with teachers fell into three main areas:

#### **Assisting with planning**

- Helping teachers to see how new thinking could be integrated with their existing planning formats
- Making integration easier for teachers through assisting with cross-curriculum planning
- Attending planning meetings to assist the team to re-develop their plans.

#### **Offering PLD**

- Using staff meetings to reach all teachers and run engaging and useful activities that are easy for teachers to adapt (e.g., how to incorporate a game within a maths lesson)
- Modelling lessons and ways to reflect on practice before moving onto activities that might be perceived as more threatening, such as teacher observations and feedback
- Linking practices back to the curriculum, for example asking reflective questions about how school activities link to the HPE learning area, or assisting staff to unpack the key ideas in the HPE learning area
- Developing a bank of videos and photos as a resource to share

- Working first with a whole syndicate or an interested syndicate to develop a team of early adopter resource teachers at a school.

**Providing positive feedback**

- Celebrating small wins
- Encouraging staff to build on their existing knowledge and providing lots of positive feedback to teachers to build confidence, before offering suggestions for adaptations.

*Working in the secondary context—challenges and opportunities*

The workforce were finding it was “harder to get in” to secondary schools, and were less clear what form Play.sport might take in these schools. There are other factors that are contributing to a slower start in secondary schools including the size of the schools, and the existence of specialised PE departments and teachers. It was suggested that to work with secondary schools and get them on board, Play.sport needed to be clearer about funding, timing, and intentions. One secondary school proposed offering a “menu of choices” that were concrete projects.

The secondary space needs to be worked out.  
*(Workforce, Waitakere)*

Although slow to get started, the involvement of secondary schools is also opening up some opportunities for connections between primary and secondary schools. The following opportunities were suggested or are in a planning stage.

- Building student leadership capabilities through secondary students working with primary students
- Enabling primary—and in particular intermediate—staff to observe PE in secondary settings so they can better understand progressions
- Enabling secondary staff to visit local primary schools to understand their context and build stronger pathways
- Opportunities for the PE mentors from a primary background to observe quality PE in secondary schools to assist in planning and focusing on progressions.

[To build stronger] pathways – we would like to visit local primary and intermediates (with our HoD PE) to see what they are doing.  
*(Secondary School)*

I’d really like the secondary HOD PE to be part of the workshop so primary schools can see they have another source of expertise in their community and they can hear each other’s challenges.  
*(Workforce)*

## The high quality workforce is a strength of Play.sport

A clear theme in interviews with schools, echoed by most stakeholders, was the calibre of the workforce. Three particular qualities were highlighted:

- their **expert knowledge**. The workforce is experienced in working in schools (many as teachers), and are passionate about sharing this knowledge. Just one school we visited had found this notion of ‘experts’ a less positive experience, as they didn’t feel confident to challenge things they didn’t agree with.
- Their approach is **responsive** and **flexible**.
- They are a **positive role model** in the school community.

Play.sport are a rich team in terms of knowledge. (School, Waitakere)

They are passionate about what they are doing. It is easy to see how their vision fits with my vision. (School, Upper Hutt)

Relationships are great. We call them the ‘A team’. There are very responsive. If there is a niggles, they are great at getting back to us and sorting stuff. (School, Waitakere)

The influence of having a male mentor has been very positive for the boys especially. (School, Waitakere)

They are approachable and passionate. There for the right reasons, knowledgeable with street cred. (School, Upper Hutt)

## Role clarity and communication is developing

### *The school perspective*

Although schools are not always clear about the different Play.sport roles (particularly in Waitakere where activators are also involved), this is not a concern as they mostly have a clear contact person within the team.

It took a while to work out roles as I think they were unsure about roles. (School, Waitakere)

Great support. We’re not entirely clear about the roles [Is that a problem?] No. (School, Waitakere)

### *The workforce perspective and community differences*

A range of stakeholders consider the workforce teams in both communities to be working well together. The workforce noted they are developing a clearer idea of their role in schools. For some this took time to build. Particularly in Waitakere, there is some perceived overlap between the facilitator and mentor roles. One national stakeholder acknowledged that the emergent and co-constructed model meant that the workforce have developed their own approaches, without necessarily having a clear message about what is expected. They expected this to be “tightened” in 2017.

When I first started I couldn’t define my role or purpose and I was a bit confused and dismayed ... [now] I’m really clear about my role and where I fit and have processes with a direction. (Workforce, Waitakere)

There has been so much co-construction that people [in the workforce] tend to think they can do what they want. We want clearer expectations for next year. (Stakeholder, National)

I'm not always clear about my role, as in when to step in and when not to, so I'm not out of step with mentors. We've been told the roles, and in reality there's a lot of crossover with the PE mentor role. I do wonder if a facilitator is needed for every school? (*Workforce*)

Some national and community stakeholders considered the activator role to be unclear due to the overlap with KiwiSport roles (discussed later). However, activators in Waitakere could clearly articulate their role and how it complemented that of mentors.

[Our role is] activating the non-curriculum time to get kids more active ... The activator role is different from the mentors' role of working with teachers. Through the support of mentors we can support schools; as activators we can also support clubs. We can create links between all of them. (*Workforce, Waitakere*)

Information from the range of stakeholders identified some differences between how the workforce operates in the two communities.

### Upper Hutt

- This community has not had an activator role in place. Early in 2017 the team will need to integrate this new role and manage communications between two work places.
- The school cluster is "self-contained" and has a history of working together. A number of the workforce team are known to schools and already trusted: "The Hutt region has embraced them" (Stakeholder, National).
- The mentors are male—a few people suggested it would be ideal to also have a female.

### Waitakere

- The workforce is based in two locations in Auckland which can take substantial amounts of time to travel between.
- The process for engaging with schools has been slower in some cases. This has influenced how the team has worked. In part this is compounded by the greater number of secondary schools in Waitakere which the team are finding harder to engage.
- The distinction between the facilitator and PE mentor role is not always clear to some.
- Some activators are in transition between provision (KiwiSport) and broker roles.

### Communication across agencies

With the number of different agencies and teams involved in Play.sport, communication could have emerged as a significant issue, but it didn't. Stakeholders from other organisations commented on the strong leadership from Sport NZ, at the national and community level.

[Sport NZ] has been really great, and we have a really good go-to person. We're on the same page. (*Stakeholder, Community*)

The relationship between us and Sport NZ is very strong. I'm really pleased from a strategic and operational level what how that is going. (*Stakeholder, National*)

However, there is still scope for improving communication across teams. One stakeholder had seen improvements in this area, after initially feeling like they were not “in the loop”. Regular meetings had now been set up.

I believe those barriers are starting to break down. What would have been nice is that those barriers were never created in the first place. There were things happening that we didn't even know about. They were going into our schools and organising things. That's their job, but they weren't telling us about it. *(Stakeholder, Community)*

## Communicating clear messages

### What's in a name?

Interviewees from all contexts (schools, workforce, stakeholders) saw the Play.sport **name as a challenge to communicating clear messages** about the focus of the initiative. Some would like to see the name changed or altered. Others commented that a range of stakeholders had spent a year developing others' understandings of Play.sport, so it could act against the development of the initiative to change the name.

I think our name's our biggest hurdle. No matter how many times a principal's heard our spiel about what we're about, they still don't understand our role in their school. They think it's about their sport. We have to keep pushing that we're here for the curriculum. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

The name is misleading. *(School, Waitakere)*

We've all discussed this [name] ... the brand is establishing its own following, it's not going to be identified with plain sport—now we've spent a year working on this brand. *(Stakeholder, Community)*

Some also suggested changing the names of workforce roles to give clearer messages or connect with schools' existing understanding of similar roles (e.g., from mentors to subject advisors; and activators to sports brokers).

### Having consistent messages prepared from the start

The workforce consider they are now clear about the messages they are giving schools, although this had taken time to develop. They have a set of clear messages they communicate to schools such as “PE and sport are not the same thing”. Some felt they had had to develop these messages themselves, rather than having a strong direction from those with a strategic overview of the initiative.

Alignment needs to come from the top rather than us having to think it out. *(Workforce, Waitakere)*

A particular challenge is around the alignment between Play.sport and the models underpinning other existing initiatives or programmes, such as KiwiSport. KiwiSport uses a

provision model and links schools with providers. In contrast, Play.sport is based on an advisory model with the aim of empowering teachers and schools. The workforce had been asked questions from schools and found it challenging to answer these at first (e.g., What is happening with KiwiSport?, Why can it not work together?). Consistent communication from the start would have been helpful. This was more of a concern in Waitakere, perhaps because the activator role was not in place in Upper Hutt yet, and because two of the three activators in Waitakere had existing relationships with schools that involved KiwiSport, so there was more scope for role and programme confusion.

Schools in the two communities had adopted slightly different messages about the focus of Play.sport. The Waitakere schools seemed more focused on building skills.

## Shifting the model

**Play.sport represents a big shift** in the Sport NZ model of provision. National and community stakeholder and workforce interviewees told us this shift may have been underestimated. Previously, support and input for schools was mostly in the form of people who would take activities for teachers. There is potential for the relationship building phase of Play.sport to reinforce the old model as many of the workforce take on “provision” roles in schools as one way of building relationships and an understanding of school contexts and needs. These actions have the potential to cause confusion as the initiative shifts in focus in late 2016 and 2017 from scoping to emphasising the workforce roles of broker and advisor. On the whole the workforce considered they had the relationship foundation in place with schools to manage this role transition. As one example, activators in Waitakere (some of whom were KiwiSport providers) said they addressed this by using the word “support” in a lot in staff meetings, so staff knew they were still there, but would be providing a different type of support. Community stakeholders also commented that it has taken time, but schools now have more understanding of the new model and roles.

The view that schools understood messages about the role transition was confirmed by the schools we visited. Most schools had understood (by the end of the first year of Play.sport), the shift to a model that highlights advice, support, and PLD rather than provision. Others had understood the shift, but missed aspects of the previous approach. Many schools also had heard the messages about using external providers strategically.

[Currently] we don't do PE we do sport. Play.sport is a great way to get us back to teaching the curriculum properly. (School, Upper Hutt)

The Play.sport people told us...PE is what happens at class time and sport is a lunch or after school thing. (School, Waitakere)

That's where Play.sport is perfect. Model skills, give the teachers some background and confidence, work alongside them. Raise the quality of our PE lessons so it's not just games. (School, Upper Hutt)



A couple of schools that did not appear to have understood these messages tended to also be those that were least happy with the Play.sport emergent approach.

## Building a community alliance has had a slower start

Play.sport aims to align the sports-related system around schools by developing community alliances of local groups involved in providing physical activity or sport opportunities and resources. This aspect of Play.sport had a slower start in 2016 as more focus was placed on building the PE learning and school-based components.

In keeping with the emergent nature of Play.sport, some stakeholders had developed their views about the form of the community alliance over 2016. Others were still unclear about what the alliance might look like. One question raised was: Is the alliance a committee of people who promote local connections or a shared philosophy that provides a reason or process for connecting?

We need more development of the community alliance ... building what is actually wanted in this area ... Trying to ensure that it fits with the community, so not an easy thing to fix instantly. I probably had a vision of a group of people around a table but actually it's about how diverse people connect ... Schools are just starting to come to terms with what this community alliance means. *(Workforce, Waitakere)*

It doesn't feel like we've got the community alliance nailed yet—in terms of do we all agree? Do we all understand exactly what we're talking about in relation to it? *(Stakeholder, National)*

A tension commented on by a range of stakeholders was the need to balance community ownership over the idea of an alliance whilst also promoting a youth-focused vision. Related to this was the question of how to shift the vision of organisations with a more sports-centred philosophy.

Some of the workforce and stakeholders consider advocacy of a concept such as 'physical literacy,' that is being promoted by Sport NZ, could be useful in assisting to create a unified vision about valuing physical activity and developing young people's competencies. Some suggested the community sector is a good "home" for this concept which had less value in a school context primarily because of the overlap between physical literacy and concepts from the curriculum such as hauora (from the HPE learning area) and the key competencies.

The development of community alliances is most strongly connected to the activator role. A few stakeholders considered the activators needed more strategic support to assist in this aspect of their role as they would have to manage the tensions created by the different philosophies of organisations and groups.

The on the ground staff, particularly the activators ... need support from the system, they can't be expected to just go in there and create all the connections on their own—without the backing of others in the organisation. *(Stakeholder, Community)*

## Looking ahead to 2017

During the interviews, as they reflected on their experience of Play.sport over the first year, the workforce, community stakeholders, and school staff offered suggestions for enhancing the initiative in 2017.

### Focused action for schools in 2017

School staff consideration of next steps for 2017 reflects the stage they are at in their engagement with Play.sport (see the continuum in Figure 15 on p. 46). Schools in which staff had a clearer vision of the Play.sport model had a good understanding of the mentor and facilitator roles, had built good relationships with the people in these roles, and were more likely to articulate specific needs and suggestions for Play.sport for 2017. These schools were also more likely to describe actions that they were planning to do to make Play.sport work better for them, rather than make specific suggestions for what Play.sport could do. Reflecting the wider variation in engagement in Waitakere, differences between schools' ideas for the future were more varied in Waitakere.

All schools are looking forward to “more action” in 2017, but the action they refer to varies. At schools that are more engaged with Play.sport, the leadership team have started to plan a range of activities for students and development for staff.

Schools that did not yet have a clear idea of what 2017 might look like tended to give more general responses. These schools said they wanted more direction from the Play.sport workforce or a clear PLD plan. These schools were often still working on getting teacher buy-in and moving beyond a “provision” mindset.

We don't know what we don't know. We need Play.sport input and their expertise to negotiate this—we are open to more assertive direction. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

### School needs in relation to PLD and planning

The specific suggestions for Play.sport made by school staff for 2017 relating to PLD and planning included:

- **PLD and mentoring for teachers** to build their confidence and to develop their skills to teach PE was the main expectation of Play.sport for 2017 for principals and PE leaders we interviewed (as discussed previously).
- **Planning** was frequently mentioned as a priority for 2017. Schools were at different stages. Several talked about wanting clearer planning processes with the Play.sport workforce, some also talked about the need for more rigorous and long-term planning not only of activities in the year calendar with the

First build curriculum knowledge for teachers—plan for how PLD will work with modelling and observing and having really targeted and planned actions. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

Sitting together earlier to plan meetings as diaries are often full – building longer term whole year plan. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

Once everything is sorted and everyone knows what their jobs are, it'd be easier to work and plan and see something tangible happening. *(School, Waitakere)*

Play.sport workforce, but also longer-term planning for sustainability. Some school staff are looking forward to working with their mentors to achieve greater consistency across the curriculum, and a sense of seamlessness between PE and sports.

- **Clarity of roles and expectations** is still a priority for some schools.
- **Communication and information:** Although many schools good relationships with Play.sport staff, a few also would like more timely information for planning and coordination of events.
- **Connection:** Intermediate and secondary schools are interested in the connections between schools and the pathways for students. They want more sharing of stories from other schools and resources such as case studies or online videos.

The other part is the planning side—to entrench the long term planning for PE. While a 5 year plan is great—then what? It needs to be sustainable. Every teacher should be developing the pedagogy, so this needs to happen within the school. This will need an induction process for new teachers. One of the challenges for this is to have that cross curricular mindset. *(School, Waitakere)*

[Play.sport roles] are a really good liaison between schools—a good way of linking via different avenues, e.g., involve college kids so they can practise their refereeing skills —so everyone is learning. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

## Building community connections

Few schools have a clear vision of how the activator and community roles will work. Some note that this will be part of the actions in 2017. Some Waitakere schools, with planning for 2017 well underway, have started to ask about the next steps towards more involvement with communities, but otherwise were not sure of what would transpire in 2017.

We are clear about Play.sport roles—not so sure about how the community roles work—that’s a bit fuzzy. *(School, Waitakere)*

Building on the community and sports club connection—bringing that into our schools for students to become aware of would be good. *(School, Waitakere)*

Upper Hutt schools did not comment on building community alliances as much as Waitakere as they have not yet worked with an activator (who was still being appointed). They already have a strong local cluster and a few teachers talked about the links with other schools via inter-school sports or the potential of these connections.

## Workforce and stakeholders: Building on the foundation for 2017

The workforce acknowledged the importance of taking time to build a strong foundation in schools and the need to build on this by “putting things into action” in 2017. Taking time to build relationships with schools, and for some schools and teachers to understand the different approach, was sometimes in tension with the desire to “get things moving”. The

workforce also needed time in 2016 for the structure of Play.sport to develop. At times it felt they were “learning while flying the plane”.

Although the workforce is in strong overall support of the Play.sport focus areas and engagement model, **there are eight main areas the workforce and community stakeholders recommend could be further clarified or developed** in 2017.

1. **The management and leadership structure:** This included streamlining of the processes across the different organisations that contribute to the Play.sport workforce roles or development. A relatively flat workforce management structure means that individuals have stepped up to leadership roles, while not necessarily having this as part of their formal role. The flat hierarchy sometimes contribute to lack of clarity about leadership or decision making. There were personal preferences expressed for the flat structure by some. A few would like a structure with a clearer hierarchy in terms of responsibility and to support team feedback.
2. **The cross-organisational structure:** The different processes of the groups involved could contribute to double-ups in recording documentation about schools, or difficulties arranging meetings. This was mostly the case in Waitakere where the workforce is working with Sport Waitakere, Team Solutions, and the Waikato University research team. The workforce considers it would benefit from stronger structures to facilitate shared practice and working across teams and locations (suggestions include aligned calendars, developing one shared format for recording school observations across all organisations, or more access to cars).
3. Ongoing **clarification and strengthening understanding of the Play.sport model** is needed so some school staff can be further assisted to shift away from a “provision” mindset. One principal’s comments about wanting to know how long Play.sport will be funded suggested the pervasiveness of interventions that tended to only last while there is funding, rather than seeing Play.sport as way of supporting a long-term change to the way the HPE curriculum, and associated sporting activities, are managed and delivered.
4. The importance of **continuing to clarify the mentor, facilitator and activator roles**. For the workforce this means fine-tuning the areas where there is overlap, such as between the facilitators and mentors. For schools, there is still a need to

Clear management structure— not a ‘she’ll be right’ attitude. I feel they tried to make it a flat structure—it just doesn’t work—there has to be a leader.  
*(Workforce)*

Making sure we are on the same page, e.g., what is happening with KiwiSport—how can it work together? Also how Sport Waitakere works and how Play.sport is modelling itself. They need to align.  
*(Workforce, Waitakere)*

Changing schools’ ideas about our role in some cases took most of the year.  
*(Workforce, Waitakere)*

Role clarity – Some schools don’t understand difference between mentor and facilitator role so you need to build their capacity before you can have those conversations.  
*(Workforce, Waitakere)*

distinguish between the roles of the people working with them. Their roles were not always clear during the long relationship building period in which all these people made efforts to be visible in the school and at school related events.

Redefining the secondary school space in the Play.sport [model] and what that looks like. *(Workforce)*

5. Those working with **secondary schools felt that the form of Play.sport in these schools was unclear** or that different ways of working with secondary schools could be explored.

Communication! More enhancement in the community— I don't believe they know it exists! *(Stakeholder, Community)*

6. As well as clarification, **communication** was seen by many in the workforce and some stakeholders as a key element to build understanding of the initiative's structure and roles, and successfully get more action underway in the next year. Improved, or more purposeful, communication was considered necessary at a number of levels, including communication across the Play.sport teams at different locations (as discussed above), with schools, and with the community.

We need more tools around key messages. *(Stakeholder, National)*

7. **Continuing to build stronger systems for collaboration and sharing of practice between schools** was important to several workforce members and some stakeholders. Ways to share practice between schools could include hui for schools, developing case studies and videos using student and teacher voices, or setting up beacon or champion schools that others could visit.

The workforce need to be continually sharing what's happening and feedback from teachers is really important. We need

- to build champion schools
- more forums for principals
- build wider understanding of the Play.sport purpose
- a more organised comms plan
- get it into initial teacher education. *(Workforce)*

8. **Continued PLD is a key priority for the workforce** which appreciates the emphasis on PLD in 2016 which is assisting them to build their strategic understanding of Play.sport and effective PE practice. Although the high calibre of the workforce is seen as a strength of Play.sport by many, there are areas where its members could—and want to—develop their practice.

I would like more about mentoring—get a clearer picture of when we observe teachers, what are we looking for in their pedagogy? What can be collected as data rather than by feeling or an idea—we need some tools. We need a profile for effective practice. *(Workforce, Upper Hutt)*

Facilitators' and mentors' main needs are for PLD to assist them in their role working with adults as change agents, and managing time when working with a range of schools. For some, this PLD could

I need some advice and guidance around how I approach principals and how I'd have those conversations ... The challenging the status quo conversations ... *(Workforce)*

be in the form of support to have challenging conversations, or about different approaches to mentoring and tools or templates to support their role. Some wanted to develop their understanding of student progression and their team's understanding of PE teaching practices across primary and secondary schools.

More PLD—the more we get, the more people/places we see, the more likely we are to find that one idea. (*Workforce, Waitakere*)

Activators also wanted PLD to assist them in the change and risk management role relating to KiwiSport, particularly to manage school expectations about their role change from provision to advice. They and others commented that the PLD in 2016 was more focused on the PE aspect of Play.sport. Activators would like to see more focus on the sport and physical activity aspect of Play.sport, and on processes for forging connections with other groups in NZ to hear ideas from people on the ground.

Community stakeholders considered the workforce to be reflective practitioners who have particular areas of expertise and who are rapidly developing the new skills set needed. They identified similar areas of PLD for the workforce.

[They need skills in] leading difficult conversations, leading change, dealing with diversity ... I'm not sure this was thought about in the recruiting. (*Stakeholder, National*)

## Navigating system tensions and alignments is important for success

Play.sport aims to **create a system-wide shift** in the culture surrounding physical activity, PE and sport to promote a youth-centred model based on the ideal of participation for all. In 2016 the initiative focused on school settings as a starting point to change perceptions. One challenge of system-wide change is managing the messiness and uncertainty that is inevitable when a complex inter-connected initiative starts to shift one aspect of the system. The emergent Play.sport model is a good fit for working with a wider system as the model values learning and provides flexibility to change direction or foster new connections if needed.

The extent to which an initiative is supported by policies and practices in the internal and external environment is a key factor that influences the amount of change in school systems (Fullan, 2007). Therefore a second challenge for Play.sport is developing effective ways of building alignments internally and externally with aspects of the education and sports systems that surround schools. Interviewees raised the following points about the different aspects of the system that could be further aligned as Play.sport develops.

### Internal Sport NZ alignments

- Lining up Play.sport goals with other Sport NZ initiatives such as Sport in Education and KiwiSport (as discussed previously). A particular challenge is the lack of alignment between KiwiSport and the Play.sport model, as experienced on the ground by schools and workforce. This lack of alignment is also at the strategic level. A tension that Play.sport needs to manage is upskilling teachers and schools to fill this space, and while considering the form KiwiSport might take while this upskilling is underway.
- At a strategic level other Sport NZ work programmes could be more aligned with Play.sport. This involves a philosophical shift from an elite and sport focus to a youth- and participation-centred vision.

[KiwiSport is] the biggest 'unalignment'... We [Sport NZ] have to take responsibility that we've allowed this to happen. (Stakeholder, National)

Strategically we need to keep KiwiSport in, but shape how they work and what schools understand of this. (Workforce)

### External agency alignments

- Many interviewees talked about the strong educational policy focus on literacy and numeracy National Standards in primary schools (operationalised through the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office). This focus makes it challenging to shift attention to HPE. This is compounded by practices in initial teacher education (ITE) where student teachers appear to be allocated little time for learning about teaching PE. Stakeholders discussed the "political and complex" ITE space, particularly in relation to the longer-term sustainability of Play.sport. They suggested change in this space requires more cross-agency connections and advocacy.
- There is potential for greater alignment with other government agencies that have an overlapping remit such as DHBs or initiatives such as Healthy Families. A few stakeholders noted that organisational philosophies would need to be aligned so that the focus was on a youth-centred or strengths-based approach.
- There is potential for greater alignment with RST and local and national sports organisations' visions or programmes. Some of those mentioned include: Talent, Leadership, and Character; Good Sports; Greater Auckland Aquatic Action Plan; HERA (Empowering Inactive Girls) (all offered by Active RST); Coach Evolve (Sport Auckland); and the Get Set Go fundamental skills programme (Athletics NZ).

The number one challenge is that current landscape of education. It's really hard to push forward a PE focus when the focus is so strongly on reading, writing, maths ... I've never seen ERO ask to see a PE lesson! (School, Upper Hutt)

Schools are restricted by what they need to report to their Board. They would like to do more but are constrained. (Stakeholder, National)

Better joined up thinking between the agencies in regard to it, and more coordination. (Stakeholder, National)

RST are very programme driven ... We want RSTs to have a young people plan but they just have 'boxes'—lots of programmes without many connections. We need to support this change. (Stakeholder, National)

### School-level alignments

- There is potential for greater alignment with the health aspect of the HPE learning area. Most of the workforce consists of PE or sports specialists. Some would like more PLD related to health to support this form of alignment.
- It is important to align Play.sport with the priorities of school clusters (in Upper Hutt, where their focus is on student agency), and the CoL in Waitakere.
- At a school level, stronger links could be developed between Play.sport and the Positive Behaviour for Learning School-wide initiative that is well established in many schools.

We know how important it is but I'm very conscious of overloading ... how we can make it fit in with what we're doing? With our work around agency that's why as a cluster we decided we would still commit to it [Play.sport]. We want kids to take responsibility for their own learning and also their health and wellbeing too. *(School, Upper Hutt)*



## 4. In summary: Reflecting on the game plan

### **The baseline data from schools shows a need for support**

The baseline data gathered from Play.sport schools prior to the start of most activities clearly show a need for the type of support offered by Play.sport. Although there is some variation between communities and schools, the main findings are very similar across the Upper Hutt and Waitakere communities. Key findings are summarised below.

- The baseline data paint a **picture of HPE as a sidelined learning area in primary schools** and suggests that schools require support to address this imbalance. Many school leaders recognise this, and are looking to Play.sport to assist their school.
- **Schools are working to foster an active school culture.** Most offer students a range of active experiences, although these tend to be ad hoc rather than planned.
- **Many schools have similar PLD and support needs, however these needs also vary depending on their context and views of HPE.** Some are focused on students developing physical skills through PE and physical activity; others would like to build a more holistic and integrated approach to HPE that builds wider competencies.
- **Schools' main support needs are well aligned with the focus areas of Play.sport.** These needs include support to:
  - **develop a more strategic and planned approach to PE, physical activity, and sport** that promotes inclusion and builds all students' enjoyment and interest in physical activity as well as their physical and key competencies.
  - **shift thinking from a fitness, physical skills, or sport-based approach to PE** towards an approach that fosters: the holistic development of students.
  - **develop a clear view of what quality PE looks like** and an integrated HPE plan that reflects this view and the intent of the HPE learning area and New Zealand curriculum
  - **access PLD to build teacher confidence** particularly in less common aspects of quality PE (e.g., *Thinking in PE* and *Learning about our community in PE*).
  - **address the current ad hoc use of external providers** and community connections by ensuring these connections align with schools' inclusive visions.

### **Schools are ready for concrete plans and action**

We gained a strong sense from all stakeholders that the **Play.sport relationship building and scoping phase has been largely effective in forming connections with key leaders at**

**many schools**, as well as within the workforce team and with stakeholders. The process for engaging with schools has been slower in Waitakere. One reason for this is the greater number of secondary schools in this community, with which, the team are finding harder to build relationships. Given this, **schools and the workforce in both communities are now poised and ready to engage in focused planning and action in 2017.**

### Setting up Play.sport: What is enabling school buy-in and engagement?

- One tension experienced by schools was balancing relationship-building with speed of implementation. Schools' lead teachers and leaders mostly consider the time taken, and the actions and expertise of the Play.sport workforce, have assisted in building strong relationships that will provide a foundation for further focused action in 2017. Currently these connections are mostly with school leaders and not all staff.
- The emergent and self-directed Play.sport model is an enabler for school leaders, who value the way support is tailored to their school context, needs, and timing rather than being one-size-fits-all. This self-directed model is also a barrier if schools are not sure of their focus or unclear about what quality PE, physical activity, or sport opportunities might look like. Some schools would like to harness the workforce's expertise to provide more guidance with planning for change and identifying quality PE practice.

### The lessons learnt about building school buy-in and engagement

- Working with CoL or clusters is helpful as a way of connecting a community but can create buy-in issues if schools are passive rather than active joiners. One way of avoiding this is to start schools in waves, with active joiners starting first so they can become beacon or champion schools and get others on board in their CoL.
- The focus on fitness and sport in schools rather than PE or HPE indicates there is space for a more focused HPE programme, but also suggests that the workforce will need to support schools through a change process as core beliefs and practices are challenged.
- Buy-in issues can be compounded if schools are mainly interested in building students' physical skills and promoting sport and physical activity. These schools tended to focus more on the Play.sport messages about activity and sport and not those about PE.

### Recommendations about where to next for schools in 2017

**The main recommendation from nearly all school leaders** we talked to was that they want:

- a **clearer action plan** for 2017 that includes a **plan for PLD that engages some or all teachers to assist in building HPE practice**. Some want more active direction such as a menu of PLD or other options from which they can select. Others want to develop longer-term plans.

Other recommendations about refinements to Play.sport suggested by some school leaders as well as other stakeholders include the need to:

- **continue to build clarity around Play.sport roles and processes** and offer more **timely communication and information** about activities so schools can fit Play.sport activities into their planning timetables
- provide assistance with building a **coherent focus on PA and community sport** connections that supports school visions for students
- create more opportunities for schools to **make connections** to learn from each other and to consider pathways between schools
- **build systems that support the spread of good practice** (e.g., resources to share with schools such as case studies or videos of good practice, or beacon schools).

## Role clarification and ongoing learning for the workforce

The expertise and approach of the workforce is mostly highly valued by schools. Their mana provides a strong foundation to build on their work in schools for 2017. The **main recommendations** about refinements to the Play.sport model to assist the workforce include:

- continue to provide PLD, support, and tools to suit needs and which **develops the workforce's capacity to be adult educators** and change facilitators in schools
- support the workforce with **workload and time management** across schools
- strengthen processes to enable the **workforce teams to more easily communicate and work across teams, locations, and organisations**
- **clarify the facilitator, PE mentor, and activator roles** for the workforce as well as schools and community stakeholders
- **clearly define the form of Play.sport in secondary schools.**

Other recommendations about refinements include:

- consider team **leadership structures and succession planning**
- **continue messaging about the Play.sport model** to schools and the wider community to ensure the reasons are widely understood for a shift away from a provision model.

## Recommendations for Sport New Zealand in 2017

Complex initiatives with many inter-connections, such as Play.sport, need to start somewhere with system change. Shifting approaches to the PE curriculum is the first lever Play.sport is using to create change in the education and sports environments surrounding schools. Positioning the workforce and schools to make this change was the main focus in 2016.

One challenge of system-wide change is managing the messiness and uncertainty that is inevitable when a complex inter-connected initiative starts to shift one aspect of the system.

The emergent Play.sport model is a good fit with a systems-change approach as it values learning and provides the flexibility to offer extra support if needed (e.g., additional PLD for the workforce around adult learning) or opportunities to revisit views in the light of new understandings (such as the changing views about the community alliance).

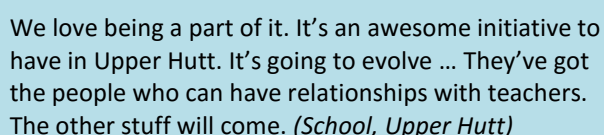
A need is emerging to build stronger alignment between other aspects of the system that are acting against the Play.sport philosophy and the potential for change in schools.

**Two main changes to Sport NZ practice were recommended by a variety of stakeholders:**

- **address the internal non-alignment between KiwiSport and Play.sport**, as KiwiSport has unintentionally fostered a culture of external provision in place of PE teaching and learning
- **alter the name of Play.sport** so that it better reflects the main focus of Play.sport.

Stakeholders also recommended that Sport NZ strengthen **external alignments** by:

- **defining the format of the community alliance** and strengthening this alliance by working with key community groups and providers to build a youth-focused vision
- **building stronger inter-agency alignments** with government agencies whose remit overlaps with Play.sport (such as the Ministries of Education and Health, and DHBs)
- **fostering connections with organisations that have influence over the school workforce** such as initial teacher education providers and ERO to ensure all promote a similar vision of effective PE practice
- **fostering stronger alignment between Play.sport and sports related organisations** (such as RST) and programmes.



We love being a part of it. It's an awesome initiative to have in Upper Hutt. It's going to evolve ... They've got the people who can have relationships with teachers. The other stuff will come. *(School, Upper Hutt)*

## Reviewing the game plan

The main take-home message from the range of stakeholders is for 2017 to be a year of action that builds on the relationship foundations set in place in 2016. Schools want more concrete plans for PLD and support. The workforce wanted focused PLD to assist in the more challenging aspects of their roles. The community alliance and activator role could benefit from clarification. Further systems could be developed for approaching related groups and agencies to build stronger alignments between their work and Play.sport.

One challenge for Play.sport leadership is balancing top-down and bottom-up input. It is important to retain the flexibility of the Play.sport model to adapt to emergent school, workforce, and community needs. In 2017 a few more structures and supports may be needed to assist schools and the workforce to keep moving forward and facilitating change.

## References

- Boyd, S., & Felgate, R. (2016). *Planning the game: What does Play.sport student baseline data tell us about current practice?* Unpublished report for Sport New Zealand. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- EARU & NZCER. (2015). *National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement: Health and Physical Education 2013*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change (4th ed.)*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- UNESCO. (2015). *Quality physical education. Guidelines for policy-makers*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

# Appendix 1: Play.sport intervention logic

(Sport NZ to insert)