

Families Active, Sporting Together

An introduction to **FAST**



What is the **FAST** programme?

The **FAST** programme (Families Active Sporting Together) is an exciting programme funded by and working in partnership with Sport England. It was initially based in targeted wards of Banbury but due to its success, has been expanded to targeted wards of Bicester and Kidlington. It is aimed at making it easier for families to access and enjoy physical activity and sport together.

FAST works with local schools to provide families with school-based physical activity sessions delivered in 12-week blocks by our Youth Activators, who are highly trained and create a friendly environment in which parents and children of all ages can come together and enjoy moving.

“ It works really well with the adults and kids, the games and everything we did was sort of simple enough for the kids to understand and also there was enough variety to make it really interesting. My son absolutely loved it and looked forward to it every week... And also, just giving me ideas of simple games, I can play with my own children, sort of outside of those sessions as well... ”

Parent feedback March 2020

“ My little girl especially, she is only 5 but she enjoys exercising a lot more now where she didn't really before. She sees it more like playing. Harry and Hayley (Youth Activators) they made it fun. I think she sees it more as a positive fun activity rather than working out. ”

Parent feedback March 2020



FAST card

Families on the programme receive a **FAST card** which gives access to discounted sessions at partner leisure centres and clubs.

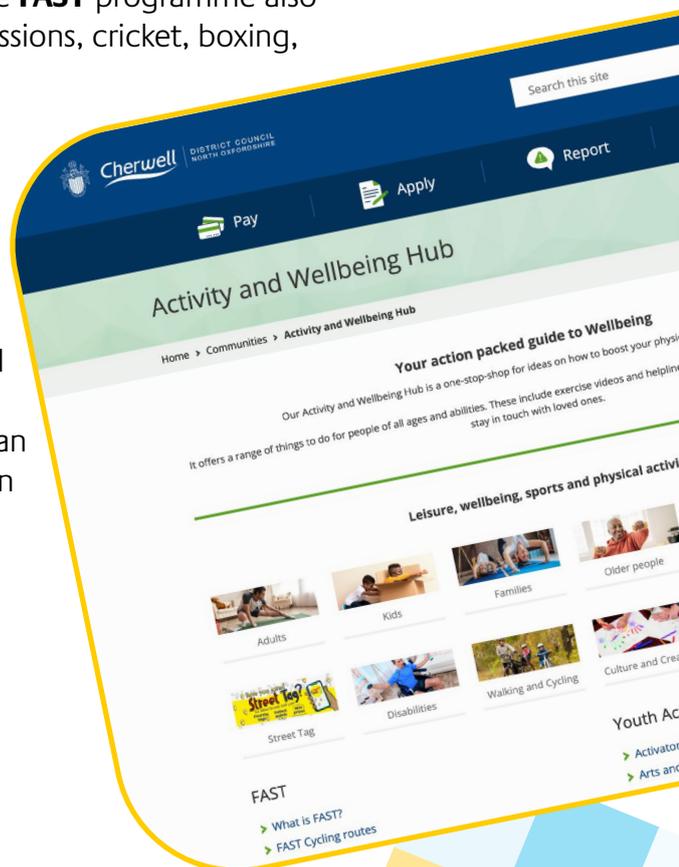
Examples: Family swimming sessions cost £3 with the **FAST card** instead of £13, boxing is £1 per person instead of £5, table tennis is £1.50 a game instead of £6.80.

Inclusive communities

FAST also creates inclusive communities around sport and physical activity and has worked closely with local community centres and places of worship to successfully engage families from all backgrounds. In addition, in partnership with the local Mosque, **FAST** has delivered female-only private swimming sessions for mothers and children, equipped with female lifeguards and privacy screens. The **FAST** programme also provides mosque families with access to Les Mills gym sessions, cricket, boxing, football, fencing, archery and more in their community.

Over lockdown, the **FAST** programme continued to work with local families to help encourage new physical activity behaviours and to help already active families sustain their progress.

We implemented innovative approaches and sessions. Our Youth Activators delivered socially distanced fun and engaging sessions at local parks, with many sessions also engaging underprivileged families. **FAST** also developed an Activity Hub that gave families a place to find information and videos from the Activators on how to keep active.





Adapting provision through feedback

These offers, and many others, have been introduced in response to participant feedback. The programme has adapted quickly – shaping our in-person and online offers. This means that throughout the pandemic, we’ve been able to continue to support families and communities in being active together.

Pick n Mix, is a service we introduced where families provide us (by phone or email) with a list of equipment or household items and details of the space they have available to them. Our Youth Activators then send back suggestions of adapted active games they can try. We also provide equipment where needed.

We rolled out offers such as **Street Tag**, an app which allows families to earn points from physical activities indoors and outdoors (including walking, running, and cycling) by scanning virtual tags and converting their steps into Street Tag Points which can be used for rewards.

“

I’ve been using Street Tag for a few months now and I am really enjoying it. It really gets us out more because I feel like we are competition with other schools. My daughter holds my phone and likes when it beeps as we are collecting the tags and walking around... When things have been shut, Street Tag is an activity to do and kept us positive...”

”

Parent feedback March 2021



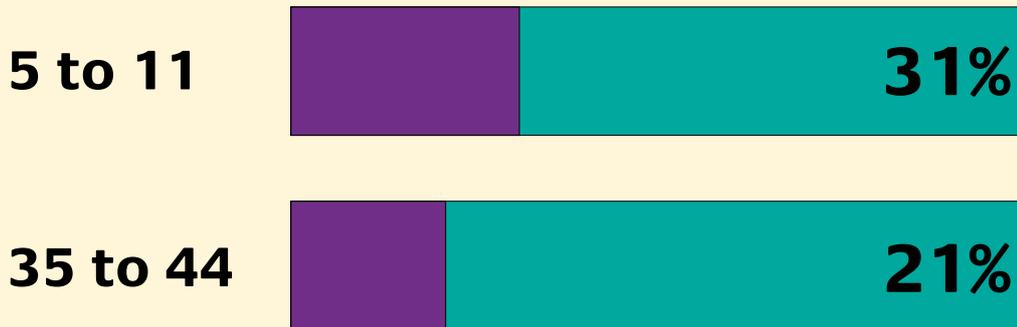


Who is a part of FAST?

Currently, **7,098 individuals** (2,117 families) are part of the FAST programme.

Participants grouped

by age



by gender



Making a difference for communities

- **28% of participants** on the **FAST** live in the **30% most deprived wards** of Cherwell. The programme is highly targeted and is reaching those families that need a bit more support to become and sustain being active.
- **14% of participants** are from an **ethnically diverse background**, higher than the 7% across Cherwell who are ethnically diverse. This emphasises the impact **FAST** is having on communities across Cherwell.
- **18% of participants** on the **FAST** programme have reported a **physical or mental health condition**. **FAST** adapted what was available, and has been able to offer mental health support alongside other services.

How is the FAST programme making a difference for families?

To date, 7,000 individuals have taken part in the **FAST** programme. Participants have been able to access a number of physical activity opportunities.

- **6,271** individuals attended Free Youth Activator classes face-to-face in school and community settings
- **14,617** individuals attended discounted family swim sessions
1,737 attended Clip n Climb and **1,423** attended boxing sessions.

Feedback from families has helped our team understand how transformational **FAST** has been in the creation of better physical activity habits. The major discounts offered by the **FAST** programme help to remove any financial barriers to accessing activities at leisure centres and clubs. In fact, many **FAST** families have reported that their previous inability to afford these activities was the biggest obstacle preventing them from trying or continuously engaging with sessions as a family.





“ The card has made a huge difference. We've gone swimming and to Clip n Climb. In all fairness, for example, Clip n Climb we wouldn't have been able to do because of the cost... I hear it every week, when can we go again daddy? ”

Parent feedback March 2020

“ The **FAST** programme has made us do more activity and enjoy it more because the kids love to go swimming, and we love to take them. It enabled us to do family swim sessions for a better offer and that enabled us to go more frequently with them... ”

Parent feedback March 2020

Access to sessions is also providing **FAST** families with an opportunity for confidence building around sport and physical activity, an aspect of the project which is contributing to the development of better behaviours.

“ I decided to come to family swim classes because they are for females only, I'm more comfortable to attend no matter what I wear or what I'm doing, and my children really enjoy it too... I've improved my swim skills because I didn't swim that much but I've learnt here and I'm getting better. I'm also enjoying the family time... we want it to keep going. ”

Feedback from mother attending mosque swim sessions, August 2021



Are families in the FAST programme becoming more active?

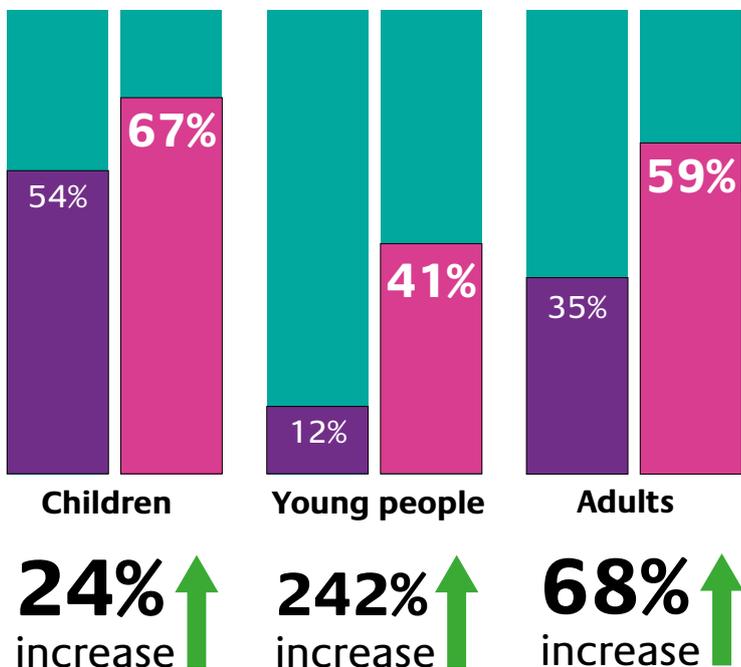
At baseline, **54% of children** in the **FAST** programme reported being active on a daily basis, doing at least 60 minutes of moderate to intensive physical activity. After three months in the programme, this number **increased to 67%** (based on the 30 children who've completed a follow up 1 survey).

Among young people, at baseline, **12% were active** daily doing at least 60 minutes of moderate to intensive physical activity compared to **41% after three months** (based on 41 young people who've completed a follow up 1 survey).

Similarly, a positive trend is seen among adults participating in the **FAST** programme. At baseline, **35% of adults were considered 'active'** (doing an average of 150+ minutes of physical activity on a weekly basis) **compared to 67% of adults in the follow up survey** (based on 122 adults who've completed a follow up 1 survey).



Changes in children, young people and adult physical activity levels after 3 months in the FAST programme



Prior to starting the programme, only **15% of families** reported being active together five or more times a month **compared to 52% of families** at the time of our follow up survey.



Families in the programme have also demonstrated the development of positive relationships with sport and physical activity. Among children, 97% reported either liking or loving **FAST** sessions and **97% would like to continue** to be active with their families. Adults also reported positive outcomes, **92% said they had enjoyed participating** in project activities, **68% said the project has helped them** in knowing how to include physical activity as part of their families' routines and **93% reported that they intend to continue** to be physically active as a family moving forward.

- At baseline, **42% of young people** either **agreed or strongly agreed** they know how to get involved and **improved their skills** in different sport and physical activity compared to 69% at follow up 1.
- After participating in sessions, **87% of adults** reported that **FAST** has **helped their family** be more physically active together.

Upscaling due to impact

The positive, preventative, impact of **FAST** on families now means the **FAST** concept is being upscaled across all districts across Oxfordshire with support from Public Health.

FAST is seen as having a real positive impact on physical and mental wellbeing and a programme taking the elements of **FAST** is planned with a focus on families eligible for (benefit related) free school meals.

This will amplify the excellent work by **FAST** and the positive provision that HAF provided to over 8,000 children in Cherwell over the holidays.



From reducing cardiovascular disease, improving sleep to improving mental wellbeing, we know that being physically active is one of the most important things we can do for our health. We also know that access to and the cost of physical activity opportunities can make it difficult for some people to be as active as they would like. **FAST** has been shown to increase activity amongst groups who can be the least active and by offering funding we hope that some of the positive elements of **FAST** can be extended to families Countywide.

Ansaf Azhar — Director of Public Health Oxfordshire





I think **FAST** is one of the most progressive and impactful interventions in the County. It is generating a huge amount of learning (as well as take up) which I hope we can apply across the County. Our hope is that by bringing together Public Health and Sport England funding streams we can grow the approach across the whole of Oxfordshire in 2022 reaching and engaging those families who are eligible for Free School Meals and providing a local pathway for them to access opportunities to be physically active and healthy in their community. In the fight against inactivity and inequality it is **FAST** forward – quite literally!



Paul Brivio — Chief Executive Active Oxfordshire



From its beginnings in Cherwell district, **FAST** has had a really big impact on families, especially those in areas of deprivation. This new funding from Public Health is a recognition of that impact and I am delighted that the scheme is now going to be expanded across all of Oxfordshire. It represents a massive opportunity to tackle inequalities through the power of physical activity and I can't wait to see more families signing up for their **FAST** cards in 2022.



**Yvonne Rees — Chief Executive Oxfordshire County Council
and Cherwell District Council**



Giving everybody the opportunity to get active, creating fun and positive experiences for children is a key aim of Sport England's Uniting the Movement strategy. We're delighted to see the positive impact **FAST** has had, helping to tackle inequalities and supporting families to get active and build healthy habits.



**Mike Diaper — Executive Director Children, Young People
and Tackling Inactivity Sport England**



MOVE Together

If you've been shielding due to COVID-19, or your health has been negatively affected by the pandemic, Move Together is here to help.

Move Together is brand new for Oxfordshire and is here to support you to move more, to help improve your physical health, mental health and wellbeing.

Why move more?

- ▶ Having an active, healthy lifestyle can help us to live healthier, longer and more fulfilling lives.
- ▶ Moving more is hugely beneficial for our physical and mental health and can help manage long term health conditions as well.
- ▶ Being active is something we can safely enjoy both on our own and with family and friends.

Moving more doesn't have to mean joining a gym or going for a jog. Every movement that we take genuinely helps, whether it's getting on our feet during a TV ad break, gardening or stretching while making a cup of tea.





How can Move Together help?

- ▶ We can explore with you the type of movement or activity that is best for you.
- ▶ We can help you access home activity packs, walking groups, activities in your community, condition specific exercises and so much more!
- ▶ Most of all, you're not alone. Our expert Move Together team can provide on-going support and motivation.

How do I get Moving?

- ▶ **Step 1:** contact your local Move Together Coordinator by any of the following:
 - a phone call to your Coordinator (details below)
 - ask your GP to refer you
 - complete an Enquiry Form online at: getoxfordshireactive.org or movetogether.org.uk
- ▶ **Step 2:** your local Move Together Coordinator will contact you to discuss next steps.
- ▶ **Step 3:** decide together the most suitable activity and support for you.
- ▶ **Step 4:** agree together what on-going advice and support you would like.



For further information contact your local Move Together Coordinator:

Oxford City:	07483 007114
Cherwell:	01295 221575
Vale of White Horse:	07717 714477
South Oxfordshire:	07717 836750
West Oxfordshire:	01993 861564

Visit getoxfordshireactive.org or movetogether.org.uk

Move Together is funded by Oxfordshire County Council and co-ordinated by Active Oxfordshire in partnership with District Councils.

Cherwell District Council and North Oxfordshire School Partnership, by working closely together, are increasing the amount of FREE high-quality physical activity opportunities available for primary school children in academic year 2021/22. The opportunities will be a mixture of old classics such as at the Youth Activator lunchtime sessions through to new opportunities such as cycling.



How long? Each programme will last six weeks.

How many can a school book? Each school can book three programmes for the year. Either three of the same thing, or a combination.

Book through the Eventbrite link below.

Questions? Contact Hayley Clements
Hayley.Clements@cherwell-dc.gov.uk. 01295 227024.

Cycling sessions

When: A six-week programme of weekly, one hour sessions for years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

What: In partnership with British Cycling, fully trained activators and mentors will work with the children to increase confidence and skills in the saddle, helping the children put them into practice.



[Book now](#)

Classic Youth Activator session for less active students

When: Weekly for one hour at lunchtime, followed by an hour session working with a class/year group.

What: Your students will be encouraged to achieve their recommended daily physical activity targets, but also be introduced to new games they may not have tried before, but may come to love.

Term 1 - [Book now](#)

Term 2 - [Book now](#)

Term 3 - [Book now](#)

Term 4 - [Book now](#)

Term 5 - [Book now](#)

Term 6 - [Book now](#)

Pre-school sessions / Early years sessions

When: A six-week programme of weekly, one hour sessions.

What: A range of games will focus on gross motor skills, helping early years and pre-school students get active within a school setting. Each will be accessible with scope for variations to be introduced and will allow for all abilities to take part and have fun.

Games will range in size and complexity to allow teachers the chance to incorporate them into every day school life, be it in PE lessons or even when lining up.

[Book now](#)



School offers

Each school can book three programmes for the year. Either three of the same thing, or a combination. Any questions please contact – Hayley.Clements@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

FAST sessions

(now available to all schools)



When: A six-week programme of weekly (after school), one hour sessions.

What: Cherwell District Council FAST sessions give families the chance to play and interact together in a fun and engaging way. The Youth Activators will deliver the sessions in a way that adapts classic sports and games to allow for all ages and abilities to take part together. By getting parents and guardians interacting with their children to encourage physical activity in the FAST sessions, it will inspire them to continue play.

Book now



After school clubs

When: A six-week programme of weekly, one hour sessions.

What: Fun, accessible games will help your students be more active, and build teamwork skills. They'll be structured in a way that makes it easy for children to transfer them out of the Youth Activator sessions and school environment and play them with friends and family.



Book now

Mental health sessions

Working in partnership with Oxfordshire Mind the Mental Health



When: A six-week programme of weekly, one hour sessions.

What: Each week will highlight an aspect of mental health your students will come across in daily life. Theory lessons will outline how to identify these issues, along with coping mechanisms. They'll then get active and release positive endorphins, but also be challenged to give a physical example of that week's topic.

Book now

"The children's confidence has generally improved, some more than others. They are much more willing to give tasks a go after sessions"

Teacher

Oxfordshire



Also look out for the **Holiday Activity Fund**

and the **FAST bike scheme** which are new this year. They're offering upcycled bikes free of charge, and holiday provision (FREE for children on free school meals) throughout the summer.



For more information contact
Hayley.Clements@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

www.cherwell.gov.uk/youngpeople

[cherwelldistrictcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil) [@SportActivators](https://twitter.com/@SportActivators)

have fun • make friends • get fit



Cherwell
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Activities for 5 – 11 year olds during the summer holidays

A mixture of engaging physical activity and sports with some crafts. Lunch was provided if required. (children eligible for free school meals received all this for free)



6,526 places filled from 30 different schools 

5,092 children received free activities and 6,136 free meals 

Children at the six venues:

1,342 North Oxfordshire Academy

1,247 Spiceball Leisure Centre

783 Warriner School

1,211 Bicester Leisure Centre

933 Cooper School

1,010 Kidlington Leisure Centre



Free activities received:

1,099 North Oxfordshire Academy

1,144 Spiceball Leisure Centre

480 Warriner School

831 Bicester Leisure Centre

694 Cooper School

844 Kidlington Leisure Centre



160 children attended free top up swimming lessons at Spiceball and Kidlington to help them swim 25 metres. These were lessons they missed due to COVID-19. 

45 children attended free weekly cycling sessions in Banbury. 

3,102 5-7 year olds 

3,424 8-11 year olds 



Partners, parents and children have their say:



“ Providing free food and activity over the long summer was unbelievable for us a family.”

“ They loved the activities and the food, they couldn't wait to go back the next day.”

“ It's great that the hubs are now at the leisure centres.”

“ My son and daughter really enjoyed their time at the North Oxfordshire Academy hub.”

“ The staff are really nice and play fun games.”

“ I loved going swimming!”

“ The food was GREAT.”

“ By targeting our work and working together we can provide new opportunities for young people to be fit and fed. Brilliant work like this shows what can be achieved and points the way forward.”

Paul Brivio, Active Oxfordshire

“ Being able to access quality summer provision is so important for the families that attend our school. Even more important is the fact that many families were able to access this provision for free.”

Simon Jackson, headteacher

“ This will have made a huge difference to lives of thousands of young people across Cherwell.”

Dean Woodham, North Oxfordshire School Sport Partnership

“ I had my proudest moment when an older member of the group continued to challenge and support their peers to achieve success after I had delivered my session. It was amazing to see the peer-to-peer learning taking place so naturally.”

Alistair Patrick Heselton, Paralympian and Youth Sport Trust Athlete Mentor

“ We have been so proud to be working with Cherwell District Council to support those children who have missed out most this year by providing athlete mentors to deliver activities and inspire.”

Chris Ellis, Youth Sport Trust



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Active Reach Phase 2



What?

To keep people moving to enable us to overcome some of the inequalities surrounding physical activity.

Who?

The programme, funded through the Tackling Inequalities Fund from Sport England, centred on people living in areas of high deprivation in Banbury and Grimsbury, who have problems accessing physical activity. There was a particular emphasis on reaching ethnic diverse communities.

How?

Local groups and organisations offered a range of different activities, including online boxercise, swimming classes, personal training, wellbeing walks and more. This involved partners from across the area, including Banbury Mosque, St Leonard's Church, The Lighthouse, Aspire, Age UK Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire Mind and Cherwell District Council.



Ages



56% 0-18



30% 19-54



14% 54+



Our impact so far

To evaluate our impact, we used an approach led by the Old Fire Station (OFS) – which focuses on capturing individual's experiences and what it meant to them.

“ It's changed my health, my fitness, both physically and mentally. ”



- People felt a sense of pride, purpose and motivation.
- It improved the physical and mental wellbeing of those involved.
- It helped to foster new connections and relationships.
- It supported new groups and communities who had not previously engaged in physical activities.
- The experience allowed plans to be put in place so they could be sustained long-term.

“ I think it gives you the boost because it feels like they're believing in you. ”



In their own words

The detail



Trust

Involving local leaders built on existing relationships and trust within the community.

“People felt trust. And it was just really lovely. It was about creating a sense of unity, community, talking, sharing, you know, and everybody feeling really vulnerable.”

Mutual benefit

Every story mentions the positive impact involvement had on their physical and mental wellbeing. Helping others in turn helped to give them a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

“I’m quite into fitness anyway, and I just thought it would help me and she said that once completed, maybe we could do some lessons for the community. And I thought at the same time, I will get fit, and also, our community of women will benefit.”

Passion and belief

The passion staff and volunteers felt was infectious, it inspired people to take part and helped to keep people going through challenging times.

“We’re on this planet for who knows how long, and I think if you can experience some happiness throughout that, and if physical activity and what I do and the support we give can help and support people with that, then I think it’s a job worth doing.”

People felt connected

The stories also show how one connection often led onto another, for instance connections with the Mosque community opened up connections to people involved in community food activities.

“We got the session running online on Fridays. And I’ve had over twelve people joining the session to do some exercise. In terms of their mental health, or recovery and things like that, they really needed that contact.”

In their own words

The detail



Motivation

Participants were motivated by those helping them. Staff found it motivational working alongside others who shared a commitment to the work, and seeing the impact it had.

“I think it was also knowing you’re doing it with other people. That was the motivation that helped push things along.”

Learning

Accepting that things might fail, being transparent about what went wrong, and learning with partners about what we can learn helped to strengthen the project.

“You start to fear it less when, actually, you can see positives coming out of addressing that and realise that by recording and sharing those difficult situations we can help our learning and understanding for the future, so that definitely has been a learning experience for me.”

Inclusion

Participants were motivated by those helping them. Staff found it motivational working alongside others who shared a commitment to the work, and seeing the impact it had.

“To be able to offer the ladies from that community safety and comfort in coming into a gym, that’s massive. Just seeing the elation in their eyes that they’ve got something that allows them to come out of their homes, and they can do safely, and they’re allowed to do it – we can’t ask for more.”