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**CORNWALL
VIRTUAL SCHOOL
GAMES 2020
REPORT**

A SUMMARY FROM THE FIRST
EVER CORNWALL VIRTUAL
SCHOOL GAMES (JUNE 2020)

REPORT BY ACTIVE CORNWALL



THE NEED FOR VIRTUAL

Throughout this difficult time, school closures and home learning has meant that teachers have often struggled to engage with their pupils. Some of the most vulnerable children and young people (CYP) have been hit the hardest as a result of this pandemic, and as well as losing out on face to face contact with teachers, they have also missed out on their extra curricular offer, as well as access to the University of Exeter Summer School Games. The displacement of children at home due to school closures as well as some key worker's children being at school meant there was an opportunity to connect children together again and give them a sense of purpose. By connecting them with their school friends and class teachers, we could bring a bit of normal back to their lives and remove the barriers they faced during this time.

With this in mind, we decided to launch the first ever Cornwall Virtual School Games with a theme of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing throughout the event. Staying active has been a huge driver in the attempt to promote mental health and wellbeing to the whole population during the lock down, Because large events were forced to cancel, there was a void in the calendar for our CYP which would normally provide physical activity, team work, competition and the chance to represent their school in sports as well as promoting all elements of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing (see image above).

Giving all children the opportunity to represent their year group and school, whether they were at home or in school, meant more people participated in the School Games in Cornwall than we have ever seen before. One child from Constantine Primary School said:"It helped me feel connected to my friends who I haven't seen at all during lockdown." The uncertainty of being able to host future competitions means it will be important for Active Cornwall to continue providing innovative opportunities for Cornwall's CYP & Families to stay active.

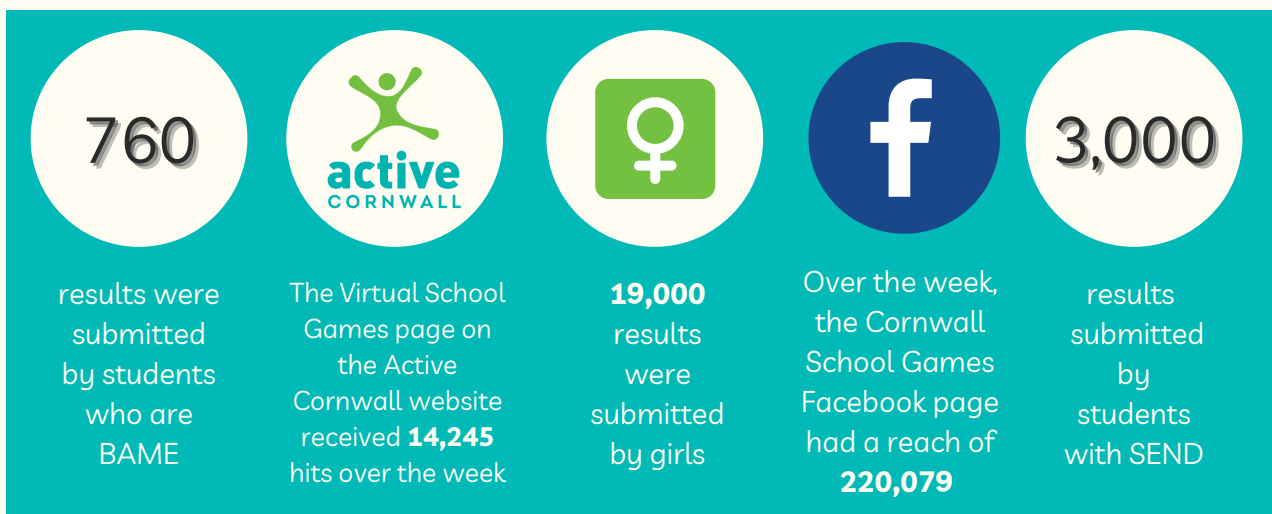
THE IMPACT



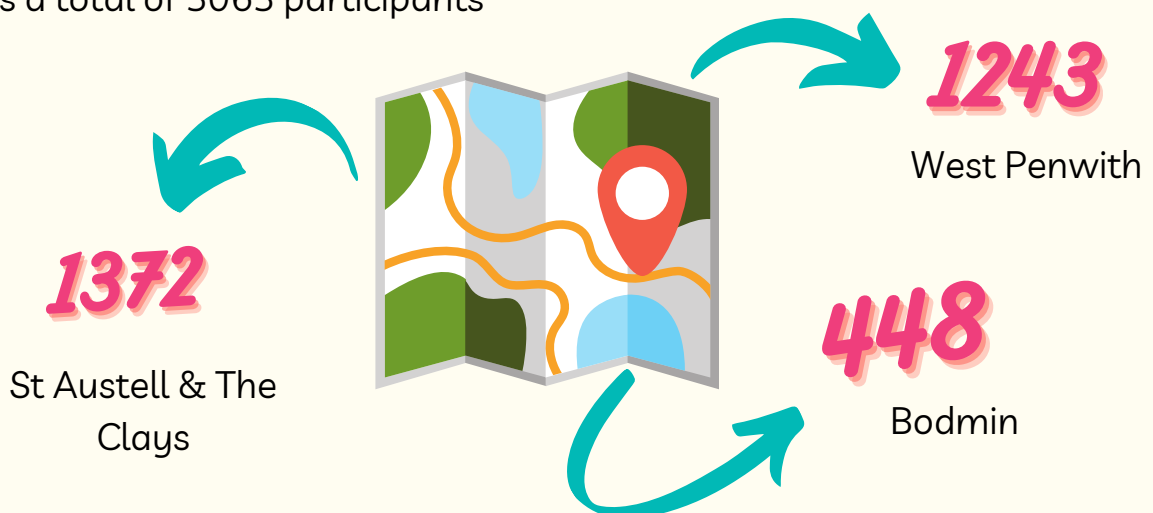
Across 5 days, just under **40,000 results** were submitted by **10,000 unique participants** for **14 sport based challenges** from children & young people all over Cornwall. Each day teachers, parents and pupils submitted scores from home or school on behalf of participants.



160 Primary Schools &
32 Secondary schools
were involved across
Cornwall



Across Cornwall's Physical Activity Strategy three priority localities, there was a total of 3063 participants



THE VALUE



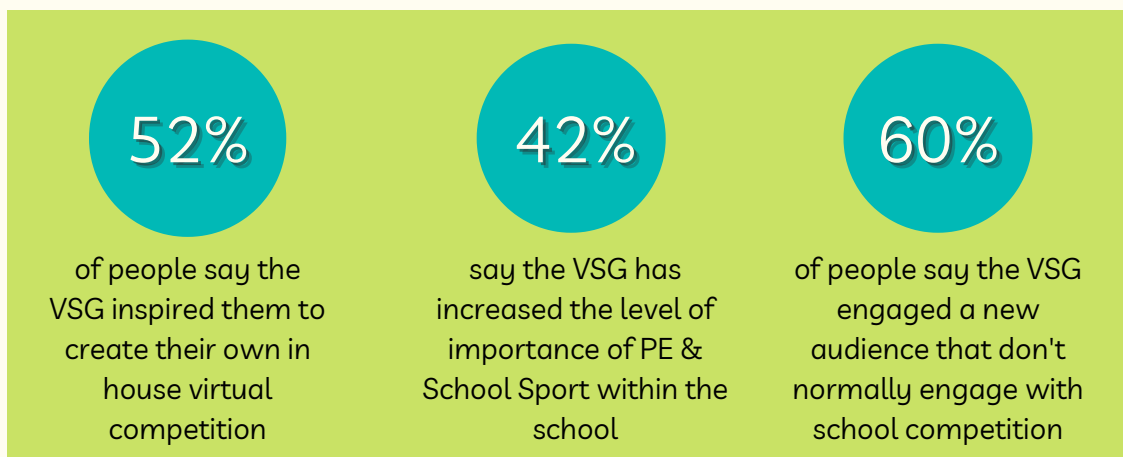
This 6 box grid categorises the qualitative and quantitative values of the event

	Visible	Non-Visible
Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40,000 results submitted • 10,000 individual participants • 160 primary schools • 32 secondary schools • 14 challenges • Profile of Active Cornwall through social media and website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family involvement, including parent and sibling • Teacher involvement
Non-Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with schools • Engagement with parents, raising the awareness of School Games within a new audience • Involvement of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued participation • Increased awareness of physical activity amongst parents and teachers • Increased awareness of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing amongst parents and teachers • Flexible working - engaging virtual and social media including YouTube
Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance with PESSPA Alliance • Stakeholder relationship - CASH & CAPH, CC Education Service, HeadStart Kernow involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of Active Cornwall to new partners e.g. Beach Guardian

THE LEARNING



After the Virtual Games, we conducted a survey and consulted a steering group to gather learning and improve the format for future events.



Registration

The registration process had good feedback from the survey. Most people liked the fact it was 2 weeks long and the incentives seemed to work to generate interest. However, clearer and instant communication to confirm sign up and distribute the details of the Games would make this process even better.

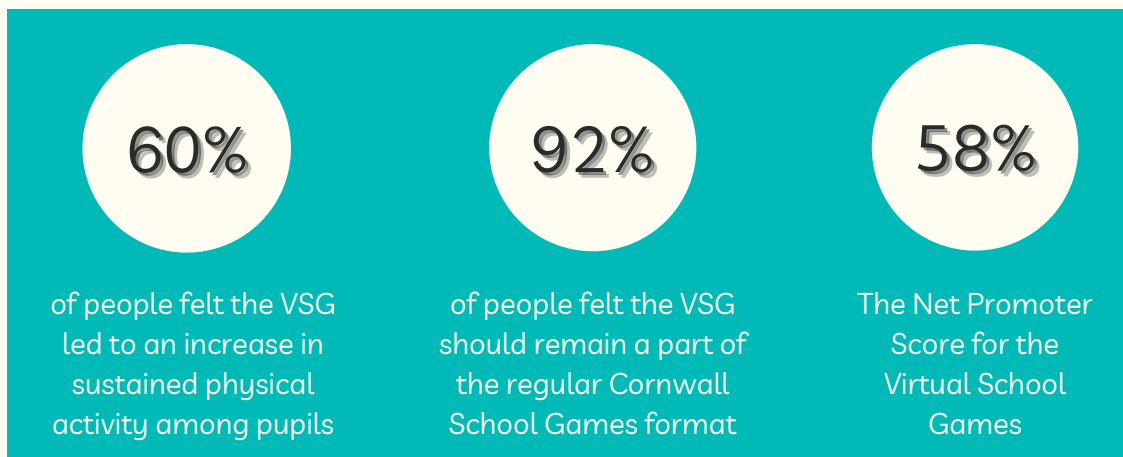
Challenges

It was recognised that there needs to be separate challenges for primary and secondary pupils as there was not enough variation. As well as this, challenge cards and demo videos need to be planned out and clear, particularly with regard to scoring. Challenges should be a blend of competition and promoting participation

THE LEARNING



After the Virtual Games, we conducted a survey and consulted a steering group to gather learning and improve the format for future events.



Scoring

Feedback regarding scoring showed that the system we had in place was not transparent enough. Based on this, it is important schools understand how we score the VSG so going forward we will make this known. Adjusting the scoring system to be more efficient will be an important focus for the next VSG

Communications

For this event, we wanted to use social media channels to increase engagement and create a 'social tribe'. This came with its own learning around GDPR and the use of social media in schools. More clarity in this area would be essential going forward, along with utilising professional support and understanding the use of these platforms is not accessible to all in school settings.

WHAT'S NEXT?



The feedback was overwhelmingly positive regarding the Virtual School Games and the majority (92%) of those who got involved thought the Virtual element should remain a permanent feature of the School Games format.

Because anyone could enter the Virtual Games, the reach was much wider, engaging children who would never normally consider competing for their school, or those children who prefer to be active without anyone else around to watch, as they were at home in their own space and could submit scores virtually. On the other hand, the way it was delivered also meant this event engaged families, teachers and pupils so everyone could be active together.

100%

of people who gave feedback said they would take part in a Virtual School Games again.

The work around the VSG aligns with the 'Better Health' campaign which aims to get children more active as a way to prevent obesity and make them more resilient to the spread and effects of the Coronavirus (Covid-19). By giving more CYP & Families the chance to be physically active, we can help raise awareness about how being active can prevent illness and promote good health. The feedback from teachers was that it was a great opportunity for them to take regular activity breaks with their class or bubble and it promoted health and well being. The focus on the 5 Ways to Wellbeing meant that children were encouraged to think about how they can look after their own wellbeing and how being active is an important part of this.

Because of this insight, we will schedule another Virtual Games to take place in the Autumn term. The feedback will be put into action and the different elements of the event can be refined to offer an even better service for the participants.

We hope to keep this as a regular part of the School Games format into the foreseeable future, which may end up being something everyone needs throughout the aftermath of the pandemic and into the recovery phase.