

Putting Oxfordshire Extracurriculars on the Map: A Comparative Study of Local and Global Extracurriculars

Rabhya Agarwal, Arav Bhattacharya, Krishna Kabra, Xinying Ma
Supervisor: Ruby-Anne Birin

ABSTRACT

Currently, there is a lack of organised data about extracurricular initiatives, at least within the UK. We anticipate that such data would allow extracurricular practitioners to make more informed decisions about how to conduct activities. This is important because previous local and global scholarship points towards extracurricular activities as a durable solution to educational inequalities. In order to address this, we are mapping initiatives conducting extracurricular activities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Oxfordshire and the UK. Our database, focusses on factors including location, accessibility, funding, aims, and management of these initiatives.

We first conducted an online field survey to understand what data existed and in what form it existed. Based on that, we decided both a selectivity criterion for the entries in our database (detailing which organizations and initiatives to include therein) along with a set of attributes to record for each entry. In both cases, our decisions were made to prioritise the inclusion of initiatives for students with disadvantaged backgrounds, and our database was populated accordingly. Given the inherent limitations of conducting a database in extracting qualitative data, we also organised interviews with practitioners. Through our research, we expect to identify common features in the more successful programs and areas of improvement for current and future programs. Our database research will be valuable basis for future research on extracurricular policies, and our analysis will be helpful for program designers and practitioners to implement better extracurricular programs for children in Oxfordshire.

1) INTRODUCTION

The UK government, in recent years, has increasingly focused on broadening the scope of primary and secondary education to include experiences beyond academic curriculum (Breaking Down the Barriers to Opportunity, 2023). In the same report, the new Labour government emphasised the need for such experiences, stating the need for ‘experience-rich education’. Despite this increased attention towards experience-based activities including extracurricular activities (ECAs), in the United Kingdom there is limited data about the current state of these activities and their outcomes. In this paper we look to explore what extracurricular initiatives look like in socioeconomically deprived areas. We then examine how the current state of offerings in Oxfordshire and the UK.

2) BACKGROUND

Government and private interest in extracurricular activities in schools varies throughout the world. In Singapore, participation in ECAs (which they call CCAs, or co-curricular activities) is mandatory for secondary school students and such activities (*Overview of co-curricular activities (CCA)*, 2022). These activities can easily be searched for within the database of schools, providing a comprehensive list (*SchoolFinder*, 2024). Meanwhile, in Abu Dhabi, the government recently partnered with external ECA providers (Department of Education and Knowledge, 2020) to compile a similar database (*ADEK – Activity Platform*, 2024). To better understanding the state of ECAs around the world, which aided us in development of our database, we first conducted case studies of four countries: the United States, India, South Africa, and China. Our approach was guided by Miyandehi, Peyronaziri, and Moghaddam (2019), who used a similar comparative lens to glean insights for Iran’s extracurriculars. We then used these insights in the

development of a UK focussed database, with Oxford as a starting point. This database aims to provide a framework on how to develop a larger database for the entire United Kingdom.

- **United States**

The United States has a markedly decentralised education system, wherein school policies and even curriculum varies from state to state (Hornbeck, 2017). Consequently, the situation surrounding extracurricular activities in the US also varies greatly across state borders, and there exist significant gaps in access to such activities. In general, the school extracurricular scene in the United States is quite active. The *America After 3PM* report (2020), a summative longitudinal study of ECAs in America, highlights that most American secondary school students are involved in extracurricular activities despite limited funding from the federal government. Further increasing student engagement in extracurriculars is the central role that these extracurriculars play in American college admissions, especially at elite institutions (Park et al., 2023).

Unfortunately, the lack of central funding and organisation has resulted in large socioeconomic gaps in access. Almost 25 million students who desire to be enrolled in an extracurricular activity are not, and most of these students come from lower-income and traditionally marginalised backgrounds (*America After 3PM*, 2020). A majority of parents whose children are not enrolled in extracurriculars cite high costs, programmes not being available, or their children not having a safe way to get to extracurricular programmes as reasons for not sending their child to an extracurricular (*America After 3PM*, 2020). This is further evidenced as Americans receiving the top 10% of income spend over five times on extracurriculars as much as those in the bottom 20% (*America After 3PM*, 2020). Spitalniak (2023) noted the high costs of equipment, training, and travel can make sports like fencing infeasible for many students. Despite this, exceptions exist.

Burlington Expanded Learning Opportunities in northeastern US is an important example of combating structural inequalities in access (*America After 3PM*, 2020). Notably, the activities free transportation and meals (*America After 3PM*, 2020) and have sustainable practices built into them. For example, the Earn-A-Bike programme teaches students how to repair, maintain, and safely operate a donated bike which they get to keep afterwards (*America After 3PM*, 2020). In summary, while there is extremely limited funding for extracurriculars on a national level in the United States, the country still has a strong extracurriculars scene due to these activities being ingrained in American school culture and budding local efforts to make them equitable.

- **India**

The condition of extracurricular activity initiatives in India is characterized by high involvement of the schools and practically very low to no involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and charities. A major proportion of charitable funds and organisations are engaged in working with people with special access needs or people with no access to even basic facilities and improving the quality of life of those sections of society (Sekhri, 2019). However, none of these initiatives considered extracurriculars as an exclusive means of bettering the quality of life (Sekhri, 2019). Moving onto the condition in schools, only about half of the schools provide some extracurricular coverage to students (Sekhri, 2019). Within this number, private schools see a generally higher rate of participation in extracurricular activities and related initiatives (Mishra and Singh, 2014). Possible reasons may include the higher socio-economic background of the students and higher accountability amongst privately managed schools because of higher competition (Mishra and Singh, 2014).

The Indian government enhances extracurricular delivery through nationwide schemes that are active in both privately owned and government managed schools. For example, the National

Green Corps Programme has encouraged students to form environmental clubs in their schools (Roberts, 2009). Another scheme, the Atal Tinkering Lab, helps students develop creative thinking through cyber-based clubs and has reached over 10,000 schools and 10 million students. These are operated on the expense of the central and provincial governments (Government of India, 2024). However, Mishra and Singh (2014) note that students with special needs or from poorer economic backgrounds enjoy lesser participation in such schemes.

Despite concerted schemes, only 27% of the schools who currently do not have extracurricular provision are interested in expanding this coverage to their premises due to lack of funds (Sekhri, 2019). Additionally, despite governmental scheme success, the government has not laid down any official guidelines to help teachers identify and nurture extracurricular talent and interest within the students (Sriprakash, 2012; Teimoornia, et. al., 2021).

Overall, in India the government plays a significant role in extending extracurricular activities in all schools through national schemes. However, due to a lack of both funding and interest from nongovernmental organisations, access to these schemes is unequal.

- **South Africa**

The condition of extracurricular activity initiatives in South Africa is marked by significant disparities in involvement between urban and rural schools, as well as between public and private institutions. While schools are generally seen as the primary providers of extracurricular activities, the role of NGOs and charities remains critical yet underutilized in promoting and supporting such initiatives. Many NGOs focus on educational support and addressing socio-economic disparities rather than explicitly targeting extracurricular activities (Pillay & Khumalo, 2021).

Participation in extracurricular activities is notably higher in private schools compared to public schools. Research indicates that around 73% of private schools offer a range of extracurricular activities, while only about 35% of public schools do so (Motshegwa, 2020). The differences can be attributed to several factors. For one, private schools have better funding, infrastructure, and more parental involvement, enhancing their capacity to offer diverse activities (Department of Basic Education, 2019). Furthermore, private schools often cater to families from higher socio-economic backgrounds, impacting participation rates.

The overall access to extracurricular activities is not equitable across the country. In rural areas, schools face severe limitations in funding and facilities, directly affecting the availability of extracurricular options. While many schools express a desire to expand extracurricular offerings, a reported 60% cite lack of funding and resources as major hindrances (Pillay & Khumalo, 2021). A study found that only 25% of rural schools had any form of organized extracurricular activity compared to 60% in urban schools (Oberholzer, 2019). This disparity is exacerbated by the struggle of many rural schools to retain qualified teachers, leading to a lack of skilled facilitators for extracurricular programs.

The South African government has initiated several programs aimed at enhancing student engagement outside the classroom. The National School Sports Plan aims to promote physical education and sports at schools nationwide, encouraging student participation through events and competitions (Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, 2020). Similarly, the National Arts and Culture Strategy promotes artistic involvement; however, its implementation remains inconsistent, particularly in under-resourced schools (Mabogoane, 2021).

Despite these efforts, challenges persist, particularly regarding inclusivity. Like in India, students with disabilities or those from disadvantaged backgrounds often face barriers to participation in

extracurricular activities (Kirsten, 2021). Although some NGOs work towards integrating these students, their efforts are often limited by funding and awareness with few NGOs solely on extracurricular engagement. Furthermore, while government initiatives have seen some success, there is still no comprehensive framework for educators to identify and cultivate extracurricular interests and talents among students (Basa, 2018).

- **China**

Extracurricular activities are gaining increasing attention in China as educators, policymakers, and parents recognize their importance in fostering well-rounded student development. Efforts to integrate structured extracurricular activities into school curriculums, alongside collaborations with local communities, are becoming a key focus of educational reform in China.

In recent years, there have been increasing efforts by the government and education authorities to diversify activities and encourage students to learn outside of the textbook, providing tangible support through policies and building connections between schools and communities. In Shanghai, for example, the “*Shanghai Regulations on Promoting Extracurricular Practical Education for Primary and Secondary Schools*” were recently adopted at the 15th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 16th Shanghai People’s Congress. One of the aims of this regulation is to promote the development of primary and secondary school extracurriculars and cultivate students with comprehensive qualities. (JF Daily, 2024)

The Chinese government has actively encouraged schools to embed extracurricular options into primary and secondary school curriculums, so that students can broaden their understandings and explore more in-depth into topics they are interested in. Through interviews with the Head of Curriculum Development Department at local middle schools, we are introduced to the various types of extracurricular activities offered at the school, including filmmaking, playing traditional

Chinese instruments, drawing animes, craft sessions, bowling, badminton, artificial intelligence exploration sessions, and boat model creation. These sessions happen once a week, and each semester, students can choose to explore one of these sessions.

The government has also been actively improving connections with the community and society to provide students with more extracurricular career experience to help them clarify their career paths. In the government regulations aforementioned, Article 12 states that schools should strengthen their connection with off-campus practical education venues and develop off-campus practical education sessions. (JF Daily, 2024) For example, starting from 2015, the Beijing Dongcheng District integrated vocational education resources in the district. To provide local primary and secondary students with a broader education, the district has integrated 60 different vocational experience courses. (Liu, 2015) The four vocational schools in the district have conducted extensive and in-depth research to understand the opening and actual requirements of primary school social practice courses, junior high school labour and technology courses, and high school general technology courses. Combined with their unique professional characteristics, they have launched more than 60 courses such as “Make Your Own Microfilm”, “Becoming a Little Expert in Photo Editing”, “Clothing Reinvention”, and “Travelling as an Air Crew”.

Besides in-school extracurriculars, a large percentage of Chinese primary and secondary students engage in structured activities outside school hours, such as arts and sports. These extracurricular activities’ effect on short-term academic results are yet to be researched, but they are proved to be successful in contributing to long-term personal and social development. (Shiah et al., 2013)

These extracurriculars help students build social networks, develop soft skills, and enhance cultural capital, which are valuable for future success beyond the classroom. They provide students with broader life experiences. However, access to these activities is highly uneven due

to socioeconomic factors. (Tan, Cai and Bodovski, 2021) Students from urban areas and wealthier families tend to have more opportunities to participate in diverse and enriching activities compared to those from rural or low-income backgrounds.

To conclude, China has very strong governmental support for pervasive and free access to extracurricular activities in primary and secondary schools. For paid extracurriculars outside schools, there still exists big opportunity gaps.

- **United Kingdom**

These aforementioned case studies can be contrasted and compared with the UK extracurriculars to reveal the gaps, weaknesses, and potential strengths of UK extracurricular programs. One major difference between international and UK extracurriculars is the lack of a national framework in the UK, where extracurriculars are often led by charity organizations rather than integrated into the education system. This contrasts with China, where the government sets up structured national policies embedding extracurriculars into school curriculums, and the US, where extracurriculars are deeply ingrained in the education system. Through comparisons, a common challenge identified across these countries is the correlation between socioeconomic status and access to extracurricular activities. In all regions, wealthier families have wider and more in-depth access to extracurricular opportunities.

Except for weaknesses, comparison has also demonstrated some of the strengths in the UK, including the high community involvement and the high inclusivity of disabled students. Our study aims to better understanding the United Kingdom extracurricular landscape through focussing on Oxford, the second most unequal city by Gini coefficient in the UK (Cities Outlook, 2018). Northern parts of the city such as Jericho have an average household income after housing costs within the top ten percent nationally, while the Leys in the southeast are in the

bottom ten percent in this category (Office for National Statistics, 2020). As extracurricular access correlates strongly with household income (Social Mobility Commission, 2019), the disparity in wealth across communities within Oxford suggests that there is a corresponding disparity in access to ECAs; however, at present, there is a lack of information about this access gap.

Currently, the Oxfordshire City Council maintains a website called 'Activities Oxfordshire', which lists activities people in the county can partake in. However, this list provides limited insights into what ECAs are available to disadvantaged students, as it is not comprehensive nor is it frequently updated. On the website, it says that practitioners are asked to voluntarily provide data about initiatives, leading to this data being incomplete. Not only is the information on extracurriculars in the local Oxfordshire area incomplete, but the lack of information is also compounded on a national level. There were relatively few studies on British extracurriculars, and aggregate data about current initiatives within the nation is lacking.

Through this comparative analysis of ECAs within the UK and other countries, one can see that the issue of disparities in access is a theme. That being said, our understanding of access barriers in the UK relative to other countries was limited due to relatively sparse data about extracurricular initiatives.

3) METHODOLOGY

In order to understand what extracurriculars look like in socioeconomically deprived areas in the local context, we first constructed a database containing such extracurriculars. To further examine the details of these initiatives, in both the local and global contexts, we conducted interviews with some ECA practitioners organising them.

Database Development

For the construction of our database, we undertook a three-step approach. First, we conducted an online field survey to understand what data existed and in what form did it exist. We used keywords such as ‘extracurriculars’, ‘activities’, ‘Oxfordshire’, and ‘initiatives’ to refine our search results. Second, informed by our search we first decided on a selectivity criterion for the data entries. That is, which potential organisations and entries do we want in our database and what type of entries are best left out? Based on the information we wanted to collect and the information generally accessible via systematic online research, we finalised the indices that were to be made a part of our database as its columns, with the individual entries being mentioned in the rows. Finally, we conducted a Google/community search using the following key terms. We entered the selected entries into the relevant columns. These processes are discussed in greater depth below.

Selection of Entries

Our initial survey provided us with hundreds of initiatives. Initially, we only considered initiatives that concentrated on extracurricular activities for school students. While these extracurricular activities may have some academic connection or relevance, they should not be

carried out with the sole aim of improving academic in-classroom performance. This effectively excluded all tutorial lessons from the fray.

Second, they should be generally accessible to the public. In terms of financial accessibility, if any payments are being made, they should be made directly for the initiative and not to an organisation just to be eligible for any other services along with the initiative. For example, any private school extracurricular clubs are not being included because students need to pay a fee for the admission to the school in the first place and only then are they able to take advantage of the extracurricular club. However, we will be including simple and nominal fee-paying extracurricular clubs that function on their own—because once again, they do not ask students to pay for anything other than the activity itself. Information on financial aid was harder to find online and therefore, we were not able to include that in our selection criterion.

Even after this classification, certain fee-paying private classes (say teaching dance, football, or some other activity) could still be included in our database, which is not ideal. Neither could we put in force a hard fee-limit saying that any activities that charge more than a certain amount will be excluded. This was because relative prices within the UK vary to a significant margin when taking urban and rural differences into account. Therefore, to account for this variability, all for-profit initiatives and organisations were deemed to be excluded from the database.

Even after rigorous selection, the sheer quantity of potential entries and our limited timeframe required us to prioritise certain types of entries over others. Therefore, as a strict rule, we prioritised entries that exclusively worked with students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Additionally, we prioritised initiatives in Oxfordshire. There were two reasons for this decision. First, Oxford has one of the highest rates of inequality within the UK as mentioned before. Second, due to our proximity geographically and with the University, we would have been able

to verify and work with any initiatives if such a need did arise while working on this piece of research.

Data Classification

This section provides a rationale for the different columns within the database: that is, the reason the indices the columns represent were judged to be important enough to be added to the database. The following columns just detail the database for the UK and not for the entire world.

- **Name:** Helps us identify the initiative.
- **Postcode:** This column is important to map the initiatives to provide a visual that depicts the spread of extracurricular initiatives for students from disadvantaged backgrounds across the United Kingdom. Wherever the organisation functions in multiple locations, we have added the postcode of its headquarters.
- **In Oxfordshire:** This column states whether the initiative functions in Oxfordshire. There are two important things of note here. First, the research was allied to similarly led initiatives by the authors in schools in relatively deprived areas of East Oxford (Blackbird Leys and Rose Hill). Therefore, this question was included to find common ground between the field activity and the scholarly research. Moreover, we wanted to know if there were any local initiatives that we could ally with or learn from. Second, the UK in general is not very diverse demographically in the sense saying that while it is the case that ethnic groups from around the world form significant proportions of the population here, it is not the case that such diversity is variable depending upon the county. The only major divide we could sense was that of a rural and urban demographic difference for example between say London and Manchester on one hand and rural Lincolnshire and Suffolk on the other. That is the reason we did not want to create a separate Oxfordshire

database that is different from a UK database. Regardless, countywide differences may or may not be very pronounced and this question helps us deal with any potentially differentiating factor that Oxfordshire sees.

- **At/Outside School:** The schools' involvement with the initiative is an important marker of who the organisation running the initiative is dealing with. That is, does the initiative deal and communicate with the students directly or is there an umbrella organisation that the initiative can deal with as a representative of the students' interests. However, this distinction is made difficult as there is a wide spread of initiatives ranging from those that are run by the schools themselves via the hiring of professionals both internally and externally to those where the students do not need any permissions or consent from the schools to participate in activities. In real time, it is hard to draw a clear line dividing initiatives on the basis of whether the school is involved or not as most of the initiatives will lie in a grey area with respect to that with some but not full involvement with the school. Therefore, we are using an appropriate proxy to determine the same. This proxy answers the question about the venue of the initiatives and if the initiative's workings are carried out at the school the students it works with are studying at. A positive answer to this question would imply a major role for the school to play. A negative answer to the question would imply that the school plays no to just a minor role in the proceedings.
- **Type of Organisation:** The question is important to know what type of organisation is running the initiative. Examples could include those being run by a charity, being run directly by the government, being run by an external educational organisation (like a university), or the schools themselves. This will help us place the motives and aims of the initiatives in context.

- **Selectivity:** This is an important marker of accessibility for the students and asks whether the initiative is selective in its admission or is open to all qualifying students. A selective initiative may be inaccessible to a proportion of the target community. However, this is not a necessarily negative phenomenon.
- **Participant Costs:** This question is a second marker of accessibility among the students. It asks how much attendance for the specific initiative costs for the student. This does not include any approach costs (such as costs incurred for transportation) or any opportunity costs (how much was the student's time and effort worth earning in the first place) as these are quite difficult to track, estimate and average out for each pupil. It is important to note that for initiatives run by schools themselves students might or might not be asked to pay an upfront fee. Therefore, any averaging or statistical inference should be done with care.
- **Total Income:** This documents how much are the organisation earning for the specific initiative they are running. This is a combination of the fees, the grants from the government, and the donations from any private donors. It is important to note that some organisations run the same initiative over a large scale and multiple locations while others run diverse initiatives (with only some of the lot being relevant to us) under one organisational set up. Not only that, but certain organisations also (especially schools) may not keep an account of total income with respect to the specific initiative they are running. Therefore, once again, any averaging or other statistical inferences may be heavily skewed and should be done with careful consideration.
- **Total Expenditure:** This documents how much are the organisation spending on the specific initiative they are running. It is important to note that some organisations run the

same initiative over a large scale and multiple locations while others run diverse initiatives (with only some of the lot being relevant to us) under one organisational set up. Not only that, but certain organisations also (especially schools) may not keep an account of total expenditure with respect to the specific initiative they are running. The list of costs may vary significantly as well across initiatives (for example, a school may not be paying any venue charges which other organisations may be paying a lot for). Therefore, once again, any averaging or other statistical inferences may be heavily skewed and should be done with careful consideration.

- **Income from the Government:** This specifically tracks any income or grant received from the government. Once again, care must be taken before any generalisations as many of the initiatives are run by state schools that already receive almost all of their income from the government. Therefore, they may or may not receive any other grant earmarked for the initiative.
- **Age Range:** This refers to the ages of the students engaged with the initiative.
- **Aim:** This refers to the motive of the organisation with respect to the initiative. There are two reasons we included this in the database. First, we wanted to know whether the initiative was pursuing a short-term or long-term impact with the students. That is, to what end are the organisations working. However, this was not entirely and clearly stated within the online information listed for many initiatives. Furthermore, it would be difficult for us come up with an index that reliably classifies an aim as either short-term or long-term. Therefore, the column with ‘aim’ as its head was included. Secondly, many organisations may pursue such initiatives for altruistic ends- however, many organisations

may combine the activities of their initiative with some sort of side-research. Therefore, this column was added to determine the same.

- **Types of Activity:** Any one or more of academic, sports, arts, or leisure. The rationale of this column was to discover the working of the initiative. Please note that often times it is not entirely possible to compartmentalize the workings of any initiative as one of the above. Therefore, some overlap is probable.
- **Type of School (if applicable):** To understand what degree of funding the school enjoys from social and governmental sources. Secondly, to also understand how much independence in terms of decision making the school has with regards to the initiative.
- **Number of Staff:** The total number of staff employed with the initiative. There are a couple of things that must be taken care of. First, often there would be staff within an organisation that do contribute to an initiative but are not involved in it full time. The only reason they are contributing to the initiative is because they are a member of the organisation. That is, the initiative is not treated as an independent entity within the organisation- a repeated cause of caution throughout the database. Second, oftentimes local initiatives may hire volunteers who are not officially on the payroll and have not signed an official contract. Therefore, any generalisations must be done with extreme caution.
- **Founded:** To see the timescale the initiative has operated upon. It might have important implications for the results the initiatives are hoping to achieve or are claiming to have achieved.

Potential Indices not Included in the Database

The following section lists various other qualitative and quantitative information that we recommend in a larger database, with a greater time limit. However, for the purposes of this initial scope they were opted against due to reasons given below respectively.

- **Number of Students:** This was hard to obtain for many initiatives and would necessitate contacting each programme for information about their class sizes.
- **Student/Staff Ratio:** This metric would enable comparison with previous scholarly research about what Student-Staff ratio is best for the student's development in the given field and context.
- **Success/Impact Scale reporting:** There were two limitations to including a scale that judged the success an initiative has enjoyed or the impact it has created in a community. First, there is a theoretical limitation. That is, we don't have such a scale suited for the purpose in hand in theory. Since most of the extracurricular activities focus on many soft skills that may take years to monitor, it is difficult and expensive to map them accurately. Moreover, the activities are so diverse, it is rather difficult to come up with a standard measurement scale on which we can map not only the diverse activities but also their equally if not more diverse outcomes. That is the first problem. Secondly, even if that theoretical framework did exist, it would have been difficult to compare the initiatives with each other. This is because they have different timelines of operation and often concentrate on different aspects of extracurriculars. For example, how can we reliably compare an initiative that educates students about sexual health through fun games and an initiative that helps students learn football? The availability of information is the next

major constraint in our case. We did not have the time or resources to be able to collect that detailed information for every initiative and juxtapose them against each other.

- Urban/Rural: We did have information for this as evidenced in the collection of the postcodes of the organisations/initiatives. However, the problem here was that many organisations had multiple locations, spanning both urban and rural areas. It would have been extremely time-consuming and tedious to calculate and evaluate the location metric (of being urban or rural) for all the branches of such major multi-locational organisations. While we were short on time and resources to do the same, we did not feel this metric was as important to be worth spending a lot of time and energy on.

Placeholder Values

The following placeholders are used in the case of missing cells within the database:

- a. 'NA': Not Applicable to the specific initiative entry. For example, if the column asks for information specific to schools and the entry is a charity.
- b. '-': We could not find information for that. Information could exist online or could have been collected first-hand; however, a lack of time and resources made that difficult.

Interviews with Practitioners

Three forty-minute semi-structured interviews were conducted to complement our findings. The selection of the interviews was done through opportunist sampling where invites were sent to extracurricular initiative managers *en masse*, and willing interviewees were interviewed depending on how convenient the schedule was. The purpose of the interviews was to provide

qualitative data, which a database often which often a database fails to a database fails to provide. We followed a semi-structured form of interview with a basic plan in mind and a few critical questions prepared:

- 1) What are the specific goals and measurable outcomes of extracurricular activities organized by the participating organizations?
- 2) What challenges are encountered in running these programs, and how are they mitigated?
- 3) Are there any unintended outcomes, either positive or negative, arising from the implementation of these programs?

We documented these interviews by audio recording and transcripts. Interviewers ensured adherence to ethical standards, including safeguarding principles and informed consent from participants. Interview questions were structured to cover key aspects such as organizational background, goals, methodologies, outcomes, and challenges.

The data from interviews were analysed using the following approaches:

Qualitative Data Analysis:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Extracted themes such as program effectiveness, community impact, and challenges in implementation.
- **Case Studies:** Organizations were treated as case studies to compare their methodologies and outcomes.

Quantitative Analysis:

- **Indicator Tracking:** Key performance indicators like attendance rates, dropout rates, and short-term knowledge gains were tracked and analyzed to evaluate program success
- **Survey Data:** Some organizations used tools like the WEMHBS scale to measure well-being, providing a quantifiable metric for analysis

Cross-Validation:

- **Triangulation:** Findings from interviews were compared against existing theories of change, organizational reports, and impact evaluations to validate results.
- **Comparison Across Programs:** Different organizations were compared to identify common patterns and unique approaches in achieving goals.

4) RESULTS

Our database contains 32 entries (See Appendix A), and the location data was visualised using ArcGIS (see Figures 1-2).

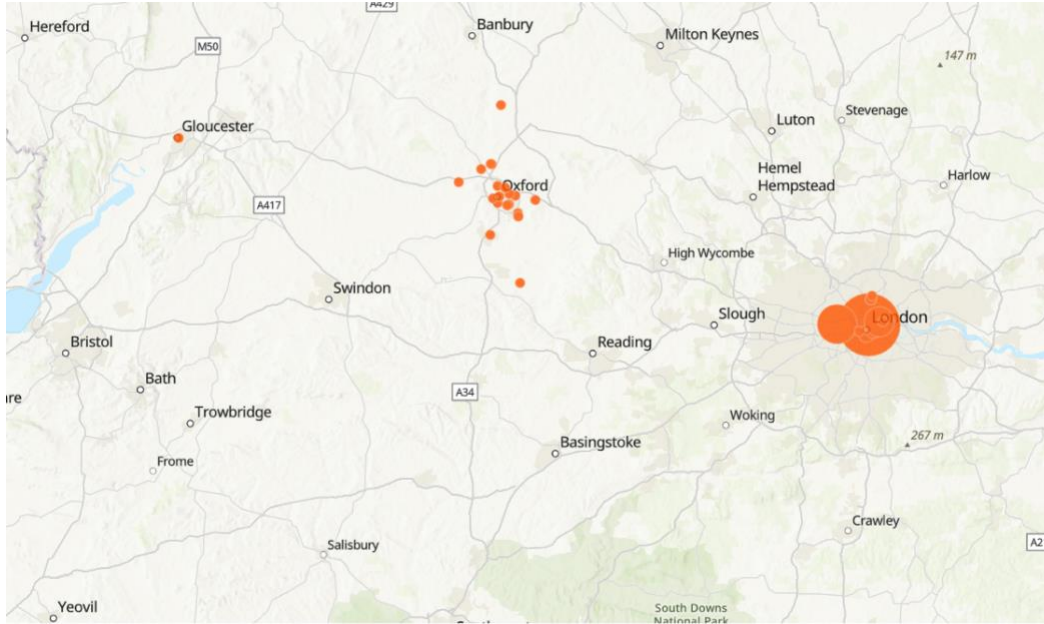


Figure 1: Map of South England with all of the initiatives we have covered, depicted as circles sized as per the number of individual branches the initiatives run.

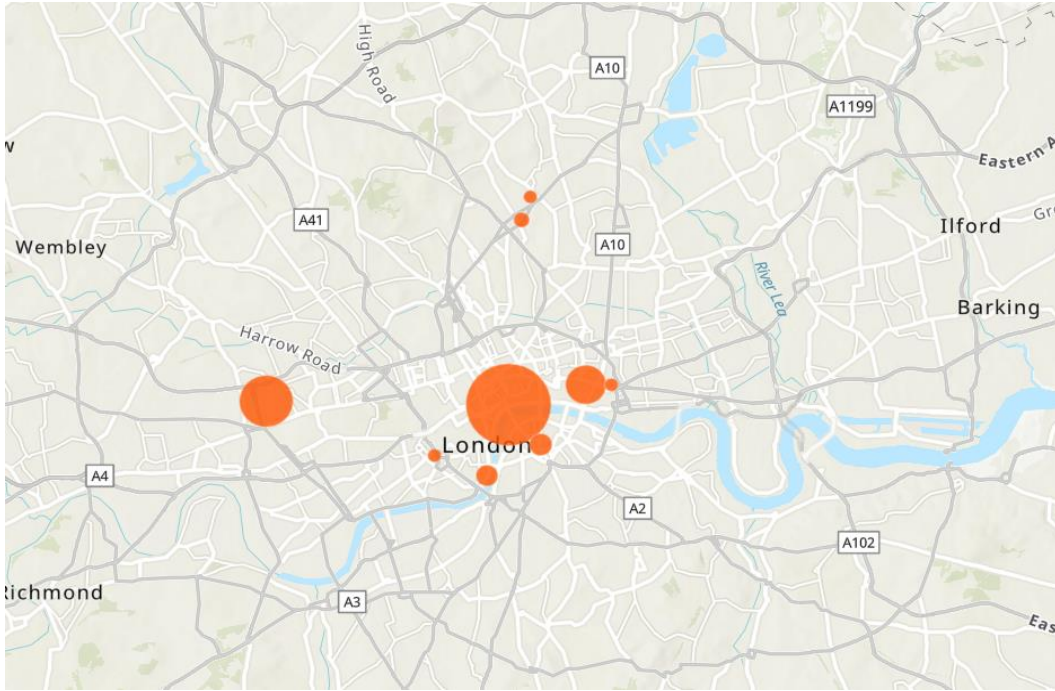


Figure 2: Many of the multi-branch initiatives are centred in London; therefore, many of the initiatives in London are represented by a larger circle. This is a map of the initiatives headquartered in or active in London.

The database consists of mainly two types of organisations, NGOs and State Schools, with slightly more NGOs (see Figures 3-5).

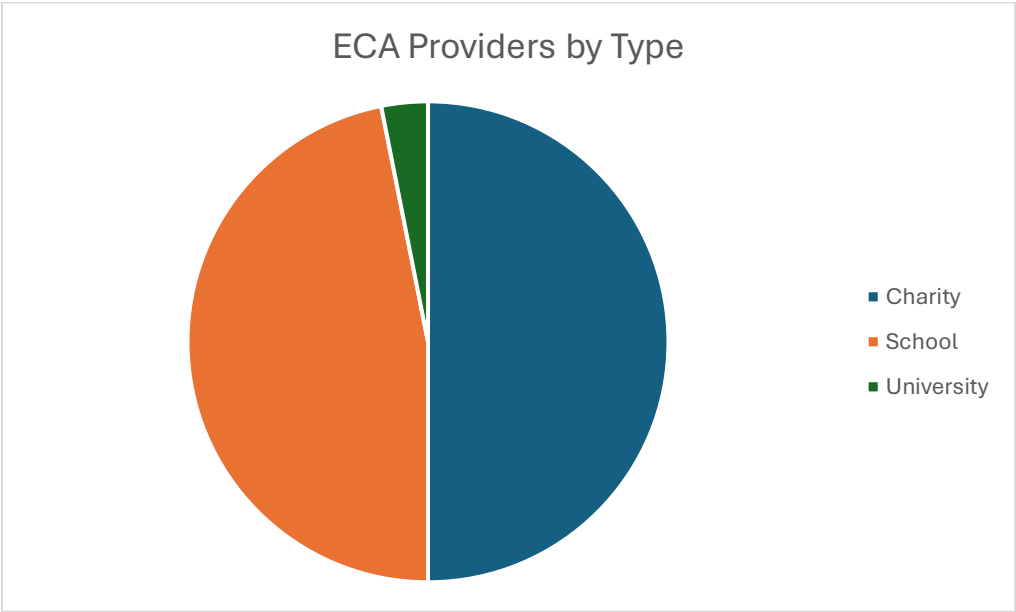


Figure 3: Pie Chart of ECA providers, organised by the type of providers.



Figure 4: Map of South England initiatives classified on the basis of whether they were run by schools (red), charities (blue), or universities (green).

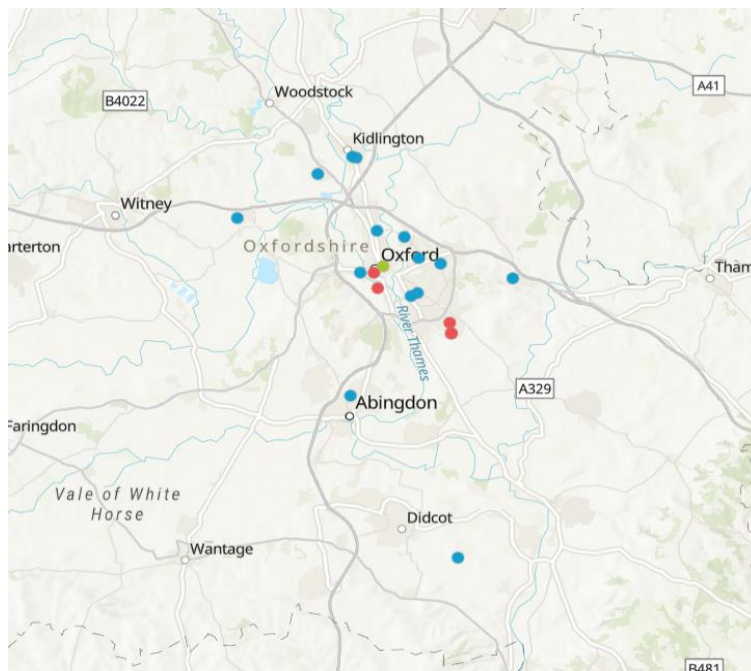


Figure 5: Map of Oxford initiatives classified on the basis of whether they were run by schools (red), charities (blue), or universities (green).

Furthermore, the number of charities providing ECAs has increased in recent decades, from 3 in 1995 to 14 today (see Figure 6).

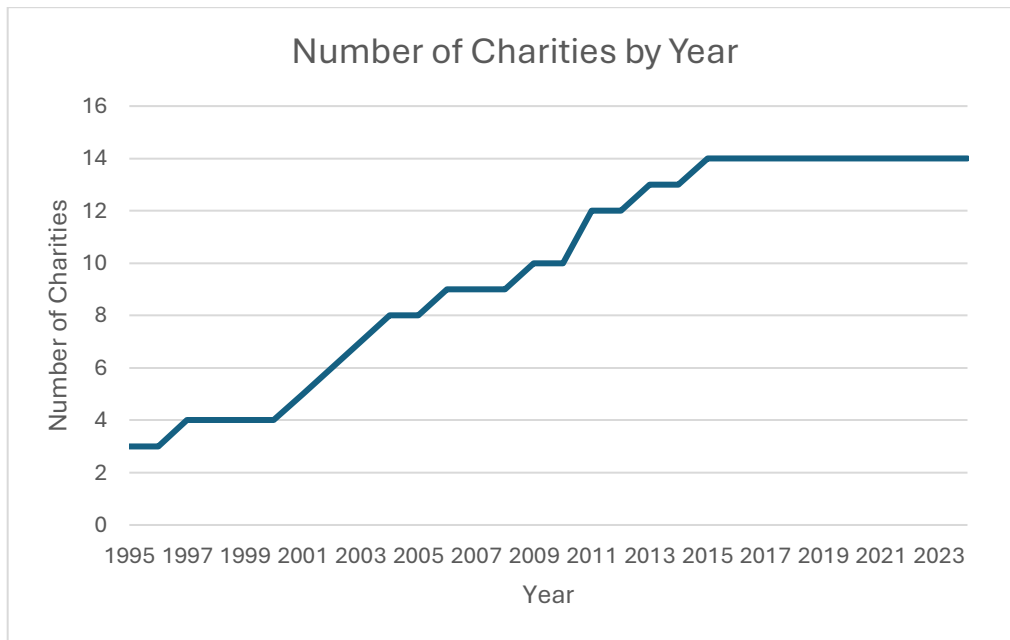


Figure 6: The number of charities tracked in our database over time.

The nature of programs is different across these two categories: activities classified under “Fun games”, or “Sports” often come from school-based initiatives, while arts and academic programs tend to be offered by charities. This division hints at a functional separation, where schools focus on recreation and physical education, while charities offer more structured learning and development programs. Furthermore, 60% of the NGOs we found had multiple locations across the UK. We found that this correlated closely to the income and expenditure of the NGOs. Only 24% of them offer online activities, whereas most are in-person. 82% of them are free of cost for the children, whereas a few have a nominal cost. 46% of them explicitly mentioned a focus on SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) on their website. These catered to students of ages 9 to 17. In contrast, most schools running extracurricular activities were primary schools, catering to children aged 3-11.

These programs generally run from Monday to Friday from 3pm to around 5pm after school. The type of activities in these programs are almost entirely sports and arts.

5) DISCUSSION

Most of the organisations that we found are charities, with activities that range from arts and academic support to sports and life skills. Additionally, many organisations offer their services free of charge or at very low costs, which enhances accessibility for a wider audience. Several charities were founded in the late 2000s and early 2010s, indicating a growing focus on community-based work in the last decades. This trend aligns with similar trends in other countries, such as the United States and China, highlighting that nations across the world are recognising the importance of equitable access to ECAs.

It is also worth noting that most organizations operate independently, with few partnerships or collaborations mentioned in the data. This could indicate either a lack of cross-organization cooperation or simply that such information was not available. Further research may be necessary to uncover more extensive networks of partnerships that enhance the community service landscape. On a local level this could provide the basis for the creation of more robust platforms to find ECAs, like there is in Abu Dhabi.

Lastly, the inclusion of online and hybrid options is minimal, suggesting that most activities occur in person. This might imply potential gaps in accessibility for those who cannot attend physically, pointing to opportunities for further development in online program offerings.

Since the dataset only includes organisations that were accessible or discoverable, it is important to note that the findings reflect a partial representation of available services in the area, rather than a comprehensive overview. For example, the Activities Oxfordshire database was missing local initiatives such as the Dovecote Centre. For the future, we would recommend that the Oxfordshire and UK governments take a more active role in ensuring equitable access to ECAs for local students. In Oxfordshire, we would suggest greater grassroots involvement of the

county government with existing schools and charities offering ECAs to spread awareness and improve access to these activities for local students. Through this grassroots involvement, we would recommend that a more comprehensive database of ECAs be made, so that information about these initiatives is easily accessible online. On a national level, we would suggest that the data available about such initiatives be standardised, and further that once this standardised data is available, more research be conducted to understand the effects of these initiatives and glean insights from particularly successful initiatives.

6) CONCLUSION

This research investigated what extracurricular activities students in socioeconomically deprived areas have available to them, and how these ECAs are organised. While developing this ECAs database focused on disadvantaged students within the UK, we were surprised by how little data on such ECAs in the UK was available publicly, and how little standardisation there was of such data. Not only did we find different kinds of information for schools and charities, but we also found that the purpose of the ECAs provided by each type of provider differed, with schools and some charities being more focused on providing a place for students to stay after school while other charities had more specific aims to improve children's achievement in given areas. We also noted the efforts of some governments to create platforms to find activities available to students, and how partnering directly with ECA providers resulted in more comprehensive platforms than what is available currently in Oxfordshire. This will assist in improving of access inhibiting students from participating in these activities, a common theme across many other countries. While similar issues are addressed in vastly different ways from country to country, with some efforts being spearheaded by government and others by NGOs and charities, within the UK

context the database piloted is required to better understand the current landscape. With such a tool, novel and innovative solutions can then be developed.

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APPENDIX A: DATABASE

The following 3 pages contain the database in its entirety.

Name	Postcode	# of location: In Oxfordshire?	Online	At/outside school	If run by school, does it have	Type of Organization	Students Apply?	Participant Cost
Blackbird Legs Adventure Playground	OX4 6BG	1 Yes	No	At	NA	Charity	No	3 per sessh
Saturday Club	WC2R 1LA	78 Yes	No	At	NA	Charity	Yes	Free
Oxfordshire Community Foundation	OX1 1HD	1 Yes	-	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Leys OD1 Youth Project	OX4 7BU	1 Yes	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Windmill Primary School	OX3 8NG	1 Yes	No	At	No	School	No	Variable (some free)
IntUniversity	W11 4EQ	44 Yes	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Trinity College Outreach	OX1 3BH	1 Yes	Yes	Outside	NA	University	Yes (teachers apply)	Free
Literacy/Pirates	N7 7NY	2 No	No	At	NA	Charity	No	£25 per term
Sutton Trust	SW1P 4QP	10 No	Yes	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
The Brilliant Club	SW1W 0DH	-	Yes	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
The Prince's Trust	SE1 8EG	11 No	Yes	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Create	EC2N 2HE	30 Yes	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	
Access to Sports Project	N7 7NY	3 No	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Leap Confronting Conflict	N4 3JU	-	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
Streets of Growth	E1 7EX	1 No	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	Free
TheMusicWorks	GL1 1RP	1 No	No	Outside	NA	Charity	No	
Bartholomew School	OX29 4AP	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
Gosford Hill School	OX5 2NT	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
Enrichment activities (Headington Rye)	OX3 0BY	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
Cherwell School	OX2 7EE	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
Fitzharys School	OX14 1NP	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	£38.00 Per day
Active Clubs - West Oxford Primary School	OX2 0BY	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	£9.50 After school per session
Cool Kids Club Breakfast and After School Club at Wheatley Pr	OX33 1NN	1 Yes	-	-	NA	School	No	£3.00 Per session
Dovecote Children And Families Project Afterschool Club	OX4 7BU	1 Yes	-	Outside	NA	Charity	No	
Heyford Park School Exended Services (Breakfast and After School Club)	OX25 5HD	1 Yes	-	At	NA	School	No	£13.00 After school per session
South Oxfordshire Adventure Playground SOAP (Open Access)	OX1 4QH	1 Yes	-	Outside	NA	Charity	No	No cost, partially funded by City Council
St Frideswide Primary School	OX4 3DJ	1 Yes	-	At	NA	School	No	
William Tetcher primary school	OX5 1LW	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
Larkise Primary School	OX4 4AN	1 Yes	-	At	NA	School	No	
Stricholas' primary and nursery school	OX3 0PJ	1 Yes	-	At	NA	School	No	
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School	OX5 1EA	1 Yes	-	At	Yes	School	No	
South Moreton Primary School	OX11 9AG	1 Yes	-	At	NA	School	No	

Income	Expenditure	Income from govt	Age Range	Special Needs Experience	Opening Days	Aims	Type of Activity
110343	97455	39500	8 to 13	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	Across the UK, the National Saturday Club gives 13-16 year olds the opportunity to study	Fun/games Arts, academic Academic, Life skills
349767	1077316	605000	13 to 16	-	Monday - Friday 7:45am-9:00am	The Leys Community Development Initiative is a charity based in Blackbird Leys, Oxford. It runs life enriching activities for both junior and senior groups.	Fun games Sports, arts, games Academic
97374	141694	32105	9 to 17	-	Monday - Friday 3:30pm-5:15pm	Supports young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to attain their chosen	Academic
11596866	10852662	-	5 to 11	-	Tuesday 3:30pm-5:30pm	We offer a diverse and flexible programme of outreach events for schools, teachers and parents in our link regions, including outdoor visits into schools and welcoming school groups to the college.	Academic
-	-	-	7 to 18	-	Wednesday 3:30pm-5:15pm	We celebrate everything they do, we develop their literacy, confidence and perseverance	Academic
1047897	1104252	87054	9 to 12	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	We support young people from less advantaged backgrounds to access leading universities and careers. In partnership with universities and employers, we run engaging programmes that give students practical advice and leave them feeling inspired and more confident about their future.	Academic
10.4 million	11 million	-	11 to 18	-	Monday - Friday 7:45am-9:00am	We mobilise the PhD community to support students who are less advantaged to access the most competitive universities and succeed when they get there.	Academic
4.7 million	5.1 million	-	8 to 18	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-5:30pm	We help young people from disadvantaged communities and those facing the greatest adversity by supporting them to build the confidence and skills to live, learn and earn.	Life skills
87 million	83 million	-	11 to 30	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	To use the creative arts to connect, empower, inspire and upskill society's most disadvantaged and vulnerable people, raising aspirations, building self-esteem, reducing isolation and enhancing wellbeing.	Arts
1.2 million	1.26 million	-	All ages	-	Monday - Friday 3:15pm-5:15pm	We provide a diverse coaching programme across a variety of sports for young people and adults. We also deliver a coach education programme that equips local people with nationally recognised qualifications.	Sports
482,000	496,000	510	5 to 24	-	Monday - Friday 7:45am-9:00am	To give young people and the adults in their lives the skills to effectively navigate conflict. Through our training, we provide the tools to foster healthy relationships, make positive decisions and inspire self-growth.	Life skills
1.1 million	1 million	-	11 to 25	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	We are a dynamic grassroots charity with a pioneering approach for re-engaging young adults aged 15-25 to reduce harm and transform their lives through developing safer lifestyles, lived environments and maintaining education and career progression.	Life skills
765632	562400	181449	Mixed	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	We're specialists in working with young people in challenging circumstances to help them reach their full potential in music, in learning, and in life.	Arts
1675021	1557458	262900	11 to 18	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm	Outside the classroom is a whole world of experience, waiting to be explored, and we have a wealth of teams, clubs, societies, lectures, trips and enrichment opportunities designed to develop character and skills for life.	Sports, arts, academic Sports, arts, academic Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	11 to 19	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	primary + secondary	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	11 to 18	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	4 - 11 years (primary)	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	From 3 years to 11 years	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	4 - 9 years	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	Moderate learning difficulties	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	Yes	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	3 - 18 years	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	7 + years	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	3 to 11	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	4 to 11	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	3 to 11	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	3 to 11	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic
-	-	-	3 to 11	-	Monday - Friday 3:00pm-6:00pm		Sports, arts, academic

SDG Focus	Type of School	Employees	Founded	Location(s)	Programme link	Notes
3 (3,4)	State	6	1976	Oxford	https://hap.org.uk/afres-school-club/	78 locations across England, Wales, Isle of Man; only noted London HQ. Parsing data is difficult, and their efforts are split up across multiple progr
4 (4,3,4,4)	NA	122	2015	NA	https://sauraxa-club.org/club/alexander-hays-sch-oxford-colleges-science-engineering/	
1, 4	NA		2013	Oxford	https://oxfordshire.org/objechnel/	
3 (3,4)	NA	7	2009	Oxford	https://evscol.co.uk/youth-direct/our-youth-sessions/	
4	State	-		Oxford	Winchill, Bernarv School	
3	State	2146	2006	NA	https://touniversity.org/what-we-do/our-grammar-school-grammars/additional-programmes/student-opportunities/	
4	State (mostly)	60+	-	Oxford	OUEteach Programmes, Trinity College Oxford	
4	State (mostly)	26	2011	London	https://literarylives.org/	
4, 10	State	30	1997	NA	https://www.suithontrust.com/	
4, 10		100+	2011		https://thehillclub.org/	
8		1200	1976		https://www.dojones-trust.org.uk/	
8, 10		15-20	2003		https://realearts.org.uk/	
3, 10	NA	49	2002	London	https://access2osports.org.uk/	
16		20-30	1987		https://leanconflictingconflict.org.uk/	
10, 16			2001		https://www.streetsofgrowth.org/	
4, 10	State	51	2004	Oxford	https://thebanjosworks.org.uk/	
3, 4	State	-		Oxford	https://www.banholonew.oxon.sch.uk/346/extracurricular-activities	
3, 4	State	-		Oxford	https://gostord-hill.oxon.sch.uk/curriculum/extracurricular/	
3, 4	Private	-		Oxford	https://www.headington.org/senior/enrichment-activities/	
3, 4	State	-		Oxford	https://www.cherwell.oxon.sch.uk/455/clubs-activities	
3, 4	State	-		Oxford	https://www.fitzhams.oxon.sch.uk/learn/extra-curricular-activities	
					https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=PEL_SFA_H4aU&familyeschannel=510	
					https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=MKOV003aLW&familyeschannel=510	
					https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=JLWZMZYVbD&familyeschannel=510	
					https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=EQUD-00H-D4&familyeschannel=510	
					https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=ps1L_eISDh0&familyeschannel=510	
					https://www.strideswides.co.uk/parents/afres-school-activities	
					https://william-fletcher.oxon.sch.uk/h/e-curriculum/extracurricular-activities/	
					https://www.larkisendmanov.org/extracurricular-clubs-1/	
					https://stnicholasparishschool.org.uk/extra-curricular-activities/	
					https://www.st-thomas-more.oxon.sch.uk/page/2?title=Extra+Curricular+Activities&id=69	
					https://www.south-moreton.oxon.sch.uk/Extra-Curricular-Clubs-at-South-Moreton/	

Their goal doesn't neatly fit into the SDG framework

Most students nominated are eligible for Pupil Premium

Organisation also does work with seniors