

Action 3:30 project: Teaching assistants. School 10; TA 2

[Start of recording]

INT: Okay, I'll give both to you as well.

RES: Yeah.

INT: Were you given a copy of those to start off with?

RES: Yes, yeah.

INT: Okay so I think the both because there are couple of questions relating to those, so if you need to flip through you can do.

RES: Okay.

INT: The first question how did you feel about participating in a research project?

RES: Yeah it's fine I've got no problems, issues, yeah to be helpful obviously.

INT: Were you approached by the school or did you put your name forward?

RES: No, I was approached by the school.

INT: Okay, and have you worked in any research projects before or was this first one?

RES: Not like this no.

INT: Okay fab, and how did you find, did you actually attend the training course they did, for the five days over five weeks?

RES: Yes, that's right, yeah.

INT: How did you find the ...

RES: Yeah it was good, it was useful and I think, obviously get everyone together as well to bounce off each other and give each other ideas or feedback, so it was good idea.

INT: What did you think about the content that was covered, was it relevant to the program?

RES: Yeah of course, it was yeah it was relevant, so I did it and you can see bits and bobs from Action 330, but like I said it was more of a guideline that this is sort of what was in the book, but is also this is how you can adapt it for certain ages of children, that's the important bit of it all.

INT: Yeah, and I know you've done programs and things like this before, so did you need support from anybody or did you feel like you didn't need support or there was somebody there if you needed them.

RES: If I needed yeah and because I am big headed I didn't need but yeah, there was [trainer name] and other people there if I did need it or still have a question obviously but so yeah.

INT: Yeah, it obviously it's what you do anyway.

RES: Yeah exactly yeah.

INT: It just comes naturally, I'm sure. Did you attend the mid intervention booster session that they did around April to May?

RES: No, I wasn't available for that one.

INT: Okay now that's fine. The training session went on for like five days over the five weeks, do you think that that was appropriate, do you think it's too long, too short ...?

RES: Yeah maybe it could have gone down to three, because we did have other sessions the first aid, then other activities as well, so if you were maybe going for five dayer, and you could have put a day at first aid, then a day of something else and then have three days of practical training yeah.

INT: Okay and obviously because you had to give up some of your time then to take part in the training, was that a problem for you?

RES: It gave me a little bit of headache because obviously have to get staff to cover me and other things arranged obviously to tell the teachers and the school was going on, but we worked around it.

INT: Okay, no it was fine. Were there any challenges or anything then with the training for you?

RES: Okay not for me, but one or two people just said about the distance a bit and there's a lot of schools either this side or North Bristol as well, and the training was at South Bristol, so you had to get through town or around town early in the morning is an absolute nightmare, but for me it wasn't a massive problem, but that's the feedback of half of one of the others and I've sort of agreed.

INT: Okay, brilliant and so did you have a lot of work to catch up on then afterwards obviously having to take a day off?

RES: A little bit yeah, obviously paperwork so and sorting staff issues at schools and other stuff as well so yeah.

INT: Okay and how do you think the training could be improved?

RES: Like I previously said, I just think if they having five days in it a day of the first aid altogether, a day of other activities, maybe having a day where we all put a bit more input into the actual... How can I explain this? We had our training sessions and then we were given an objective, say design a game for a child or so, I think if we spent half a day on that and then half a day on changing it or we're adding stuff it might have been a good idea as well, just to get the coach's creativity going a bit.

INT: It helped them a little bit more than during the actual ...

RES: Yeah exactly yeah, rather than this is what you're doing and this is how it's done and that's it really.

INT: Okay you know like them. How useful and effective did you find these manuals, so firstly this one, the training guide, I think that was the one given out during the actual training sessions.

RES: That's right.

INT: Did you use it or have you looked at it afterwards?

RES: I've looked at it once in a while; I must say I haven't looked at it all the time and stuff, the leader's manual was obviously the good one because with session plans and stuff in there.

INT: Did you stick to those session plans as well?

RES: A little bit yeah.

- INT: Okay.
- RES: Yeah I think that if there was something like six activities, we'd pick the best three or four
- INT: Okay so to try and squeeze them all in.
- RES: Exactly yeah, especially the way I work as well, I always do like a warm-up game, skill, and then a skill-game or a game that makes sense, so it was good to, one to keep to my way, but two to add a couple of things into that as well.
- INT: Did you mix any of the activities up from different sessions as well or did you try and stick to what was there initially?
- RES: Yeah we stuck to the sessions yeah, but there was times where say on a Monday and a Friday when we did our days we had rugby, we might have mixed it up, so we might have done rugby on a Monday and then another activity on a Friday just to break it up and then maybe go back to rugby at another time or mix it around like that, but yeah we pretty much stuck to the schedule.
- INT: Okay and being with the project it was also to motivate the children and to use the Action 330 philosophy that I think is in this manual. What did you think of that philosophy? Do you remember it?
- RES: Yeah I do remember that bits and bobs of it obviously, so again, that's what we kept at the end of the day or beginning of the day and try to explain to the children that this is the whole point of it, it's not just turn up and kick a ball about, there is a bit of science behind it, so yeah I used that, I must admit not for every session all the time, but yeah I live it every once in a while yeah.
- INT: Okay that was great and what were your experiences and views in the motivational techniques which again I think are mentioned in one of these, were you aware of them? Did you think
- RES: Yeah again at the beginning we've probably stuck to them, but throughout the sessions the children, I think we were lucky we had a brilliant group of children, so we didn't have to keep screaming and shouting then we'd bribing them, or going back to the manuals to say this, that and the other, yeah so they got to know us, they got to know what we wanted from the sessions and activities and again what the purpose of Action 330 was, so I think, so touch wood, we were one of the lucky ones.

INT: Great and then they just, they enjoyed taking part.

RES: Yeah exactly yeah again they would turn up and get ready and so practically get on with it, really..

INT: Good and what do you think of the sports equipment's that were provided, was there enough for your sessions?

RES: Yes and no, there was times were I provided my own equipment and we used some of the schools equipment's as well, and yeah the equipment we got from Action 330 was brilliant, obviously we picked off the list what we chose and wanted. I think it might have been handy halfway through the activities, they'd come back to us and said "is there anything else you need or could be replaced or, I don't know, whether the size of the ball was wrong, or maybe something not that but again they did say to us email us if that makes sense, but I just think they could have come back to us and said ...

INT: I see what you mean.

RES: Yeah and decided to have a check-up.

INT: Once the sessions had actually got started.

RES: Exactly yeah.

INT: Okay, I know that makes sense. Did you have exclusive access to the equipment as well or were there other after-school clubs going on at the same time, did you ever have to share any equipment?

RES: No again we hid in it the cupboards, so if it did get used in a day and stuff then that's our fault for not hiding it that well, so yeah it was exclusive to us.

INT: Okay brilliant and now that you've delivered the Action 330 club, what things do you feel worked well?

RES: Again the activities and the structure of it all, I think that worked well. The children like the belts and the measurements and stuff I said that was a good idea and maybe we could use that a little bit more and other stuff. Again, halfway through the Action 330 maybe that might have been a good idea to do something similar, so measure to see if there has been an improvement in a certain activity or maybe an improvement and they'd have movement scales or again, is it the pedometer?

INT: Accelerometer, yeah

RES: Yeah maybe get those back out to see if they are doing more steps just for week one and two and then measure that at the end as well.

INT: Okay because I think that they're fitting them with belts now.

RES: That's right yeah.

INT: I think it might have been beneficial to fit them with the belts in the middle of the programme as well?

RES: Exactly yeah in the middle of the game yeah.

INT: Yeah that makes sense okay. In many schools there was noticeable drop in attendance, and was that a problem for you and your club?

RES: We had a drop, unfortunately, this time of year there was lots going on, there was school camps, they've had the SATs exams, so before the SATs exam they had a Maths club or some rehearsal revision club, so we lost a couple of children, the year sixes obviously to that as well. Of course initially if we were playing big team games, we were again quite lucky we had a big group most of the time, so we could split them into two or three teams and work around it. But yeah like I said this time of year with the school camps, exams and stuff then yeah there was a drop.

INT: All those started in the last few weeks or so some of them of the additional sessions?

RES: Yeah end of May, June-ish time yeah.

INT: Okay did you know if there was anything that we could do then to help with attendance so there may be a full club

RES: Yeah a couple of ideas, obviously it's an expensive way, but the children the same gifts and things that I do personally. We have star of the day award, so we give out certificates and rewards for the person who, the chosen subject of that week, there might have been the best listener, best behaved, best catcher, best thrower, so something like that might be more of an incentive or to keep them involved. Again weekly prizes, monthly prizes, again these all expensive bribes, or again the free choice that was a good one maybe add that every five, six sessions where the children get either choice of two sports or they get to lead their own activity so we can say like in three weeks' time, you're going to be leading or you're going to be doing the sport

you choose, so they might think oh I'll stay because I want to do a game or I want to be the coach or I want to do that, if that makes sense.

INT: Okay, so they did get to do that for a few sessions?

RES: Yeah I think is on the, I think it's once at the beginning and then once at the end and or I think it was a couple of sessions in actually, sorry.

INT: Okay so a few more of those would work well?

RES: They loved it. Yeah again it's just a bit of an incentive. They might think oh I'll stay because I want to lead that or I want to play that game so if I'm here I can choose to play that game rather than Barry oh we're doing netball today.

INT: Yeah okay and what did you think of the duration frequency of the sessions?

RES: Yeah it was a bit tough, full two weeks is okay, twice a week was a bit of a challenge sometimes, again if they got other clubs or things went wrong, oh I'm going to see my friends today, or I've had a long day so I'm a bit tired, yeah it's just things that aren't really, I think maybe one day a week or even if you made it slightly longer and have an hour and a half session about once a week to do that.

INT: Okay and do you think that then that would help with attendance as well?

RES: Personally I think it would yeah.

INT: Yeah okay brilliant. How do you think that Action 330 has impacted on the children who signed up?

RES: Yeah again, a lot of the children, because it's mixed years, they've become closer, again we've been actually, we've got a good group, but because they're working and helping each other, behaviour has got better, listening as well usually that's a big split so year sixes know everything and do their own thing, but they're actually listening to the other children or again working better with them and again lots of other children are participating more and better in PE lessons as well, I don't know if it's school ability or just confidence. I think that's obviously helped as well.

INT: Yeah that's really good and do you think then the physical activity levels have increased?

RES: Yeah I think yeah I'd be surprised if they didn't, yeah.

INT: Okay and do you know if they've any negative impacts from the Action 330 club at all?

RES: I can't think of any no. The only negativity we've had is some people not attending 100%, but again that's due to you've got other commitments, so things going on within the school. I can't say that there has been any bad behaviour because of Action 330 or I don't know I can't say.

INT: Okay and has it affected your relationship with the children at all?

RES: Yeah we're probably been closer yeah. Yeah instead of seeing me as the coach or the teacher now then, yeah we've become closer.

INT: Are they children that you probably would have worked with before as well?

RES: Yeah so we worked before yeah, but again we'd just seen them for an hour a week and I was seeing them for three or four hours a week. Or they'd come out to me at lunch time or in the playground to have a chat now rather than just hello and walk off.

INT: The children who signed up for Action 330 and they the sort of children who would usually sign up for other after-school clubs?

RES: I'd say 60% to 70 % of them yes, there was ... it sounds a bit rude, when I saw the list originally one or two surprises, but good surprises.

INT: Yeah that's good.

RES: They've kept at it which is really good as well, so yeah.

INT: Okay and what things do you think didn't work well on the project?

RES: Like I said just maybe one or two of the games and activities and maybe the length for sessions either two a week or 40 weeks maybe.

INT: Okay and you mentioned a little bit about behaviour, how was the behaviours overall for the children in this particular ...

RES: Yeah pretty much good as gold. Yeah we have one or two children that that were either excitable or would muck about now and then, but again touch wood, nothing that would cause any dangers and no extreme rudeness / silliness, so yeah we've been pretty lucky.

INT: Because and behaviour has been a bit of a problem in a few other schools, so I just wanted to ask you a bit about the behaviour and management strategies, so I don't know if it was covered all in the training sessions, but would you have been comfortable just being able to control that and knew well a lot of different strategies that ...

RES: Yeah I have a system, we have four golden rules that the children need to keep to and I have a red circle, so if they break the rules and don't list or behave, they go into the red circle, so again that could have been added to the training to say to the coaches or teachers, don't just kick them out because they've done something, give them a bit of a warning and time out, and go for it.

[off topic conversation with third party]

INT: And you think that if you were having issues with behaviour on the club, that the Action 330 team were available and would've been a good support for you if you're having problems?

RES: Yeah obviously, again yeah if you need it, [trainer name] kindly said if you need to email us or contact us, then please go ahead, yeah I should image they would, yeah.

INT: Okay, that's good and how was participating in Action 330 did it have an impact on you at all?

RES: Yeah again I have said that I have become closer with the children, which is a good thing. I did get some ideas out of the book. I've used some of the games to educate my staff as well, so that another thing that I personally took care of it. Again it has just been good fun really we have good groove with children and actually so it's been good fun.

INT: Okay, do you know if there are any plans for the school to carry the project on next year or...?

RES: I don't know I'm afraid no.

INT: You're not sure?

RES: No.

INT: Okay no that's fine. And what's your experience with working with the other TA who delivered the contract?

RES: Yeah again, good as gold. She was brilliant at doing all the organisation stuff, and sort of left me to look after the sports stuff, which is a good mix.

INT: Yeah, she said something similar yeah...

RES: Yeah there you go, yeah so...

INT: It worked well.

RES: It did, it was a good combination. Again she was active in all the sports, it wasn't like when she'd done the register she would sit still. She would get involved, she wanted to do stuff, she had ideas of her own. So again, we were yeah a good little group together and worked well.

INT: Brilliant, and how were the visits from the Action 330 staff, did they disrupt you're sessions at all?

RES: No, again every time [staff name] comes she would just go, she did ask for five minutes at the end. She patiently waited if we were able to run and yeah, fine. Again [trainer name] when he came to watch he just said, "I'm going to sit out of the way" pretend I'm not here, and he did he was brilliant, yeah.

INT: Fab, and if there is anything ... what do you think we could do to improve the project, is there anything you can think of?

RES: Again like I pretty said that maybe an incentive or two for the children, giving a bit of a challenge or responsibility, or maybe a reward every now and then, and yeah look maybe at the not necessarily the length but maybe the double with days, maybe say it's twice a week, maybe like have half an hour session rather than two.

INT: Yeah, makes sense.

RES: Yeah just something

INT: yeah.

RES: It's not anything major.

INT: Do you think there is anything that where else we could have done to help recruit children?

RES: Again maybe I don't think that the school assembly or hand-outs, posters...

INT: Yeah.

RES: That's usually a good thing because they can take it and physically look at it.

INT: Okay.

RES: Again with assembly they sit there and they hear it but then...

INT: Yeah.

RES: Five minutes later they would be gone.

INT: Yeah.

RES: What's that bloke talking about? So maybe something like that or again a tester session...

INT: Okay.

RES: Is something that I do personally...

INT: Yeah.

RES: It's do a bit of tester session, get them excited.

INT: Yeah.

RES: Then you get them the leaflet like, "Oh yeah I want to do that." Again with the belts...

INT: Yeah.

RES: If you did a sports session and then say what we are going to use the belts to measure this or caught that.

INT: Yeah, that's good.

RES: That again would get them excited, and I think yeah I sign up for that because we get to do this we get to use that equipment...

INT: Yeah.

RES: That you won't normally at PE lessons, sports club et cetera.

INT: Yeah okay that's brill. And that's the end of my questions...

RES: Cool.

INT: Was there anything else that you think of that you wanted to add at all?

RES: No not really like I said...

INT: No.

RES: just I think, sounds a bit rude by they sensitively change to keep numbers up. I have spoken to a couple of other teachers, who I know who are doing this as well.

INT: Yeah.

RES: That has the input they have given to me.

INT: Now I think it was a good idea but the certificates, and star of the week and things like that?

RES: Yeah just something so it doesn't have to be massively expensive...

INT: Yeah.

RES: But will not actually provide our t-shirts and caps and stuff that when the cost go up.

INT: Yeah.

RES: But something silly like a medal or a certificate.

INT: Yeah

RES: Something basic.

INT: Well thank you very much.

RES: No problem.

[End of Recording]