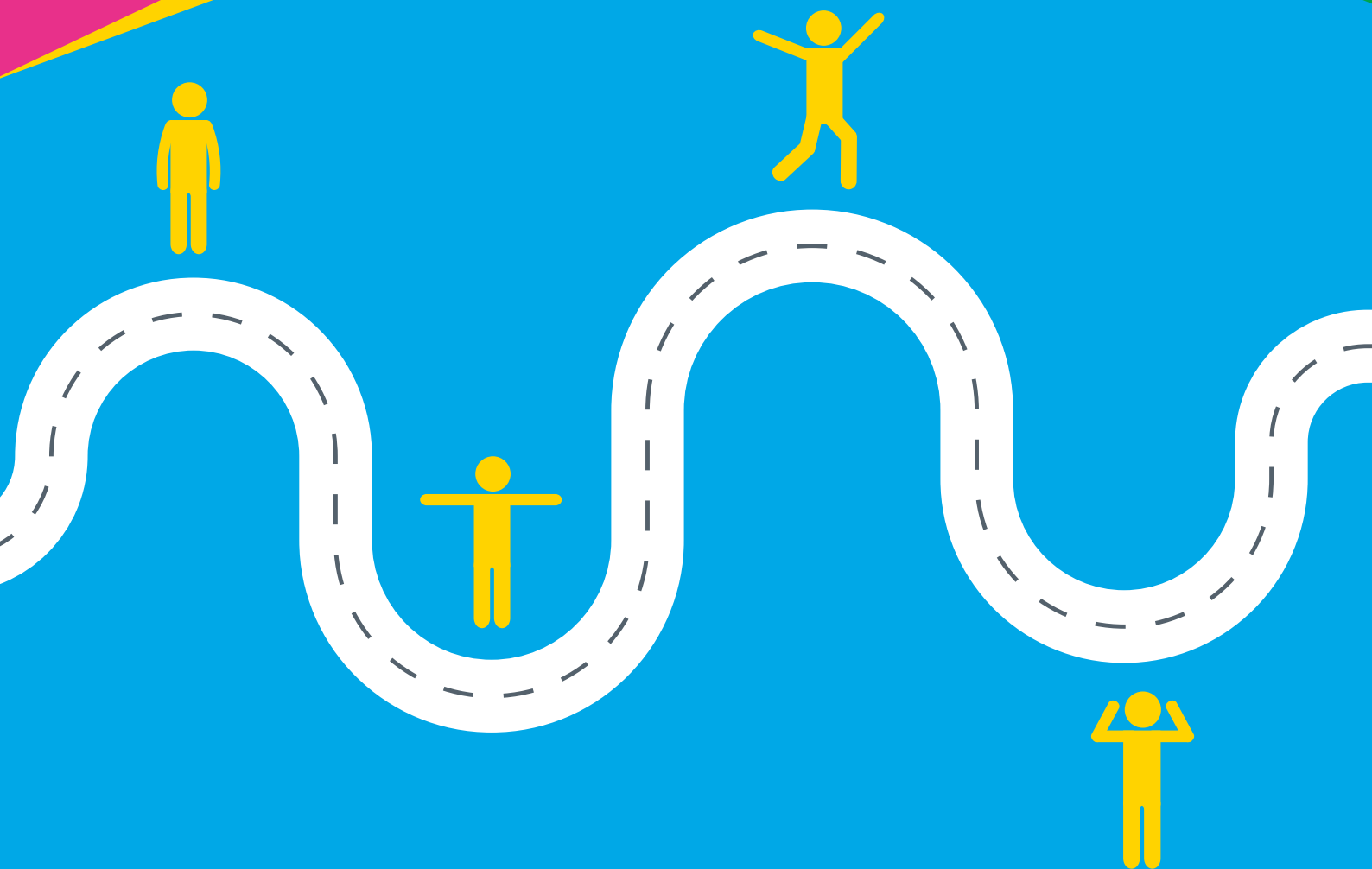


SCHOOL
GAMES



School Games Roadmap 2025/26



HM Government



YOUTH
SPORT
TRUST

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Welcome to the 2025/26 School Games Roadmap. Before you read any further, I want to thank you for the contribution you make on a daily basis, helping more children and young people enjoy the life changing benefits of play and sport and building more active schools, where children are happier and healthier.

Every year, your collaborative approach – working closely together, sharing good practice and learning from one another – means we can take steps forward in our ambition to increase participation, tackle inequalities and harness the power of sport to improve the school experience.

The external climate can be difficult at times, but with your commitment and expertise I am confident as a sector and a system we are well placed to respond to the challenges and opportunities we may face in the year ahead.

At the School Games Summit in Telford in June, I spoke about delivering change locally, making a difference nationally. Your work as part of your local community and ecosystem continues to grow in importance, layering up to make our collective impact and reinforcing the ambitions and values reflected within the Roadmap.

This year, many eyes will undoubtedly be on the Women's Euros and Rugby World Cup, World Athletics Championships in Tokyo and World Para Athletics Championships in New Delhi. These global sporting events may seem distant from our daily lives, but will demonstrate the power of sport to unite people, inspire and showcase moving stories which speak to so many, values of sport which you bring to life every day.

I hope the 2025/26 School Games Roadmap supports your planning and day-to-day work programme, whilst also inspiring you and enabling you to reflect on all you have achieved, and crucially the impact for children and young people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ali Oliver".

**Ali Oliver MBE — Chief Executive
Youth Sport Trust**

As we enter the 2025/26 academic year—the fourteenth year of the School Games, I want to extend my sincere thanks to each and every one of you for your continued dedication and daily efforts to support children and young people to be more active.

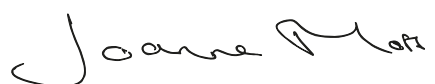
With just 48% of children currently meeting the Chief Medical Officer's Physical Activity Guidelines, it's clear that much more needs to be done to tackle both inactivity and inequality, ensuring every child has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from being active. This need is even more pressing given that only 49% of children strongly agree that they enjoy being active. This highlights the vital role of the School Games Network's increasing focus on creating positive, engaging experiences through the School Games, where physical activity and sport are made inclusive and accessible for all.

The impact and value of the SGO Network have been clearly highlighted in the recent SGO Network Review. Findings include:

- 93% of schools reported their SGO has a positive impact on their least active young people and 94% reported a positive impact on providing equal opportunities.
- 88% of schools said their sport and physical activity offer would decline without the involvement of their SGO.

Looking ahead, the 2025/26 academic year brings exciting opportunities to align our efforts more closely with wider developments in education. These include the Curriculum and Assessment Review, the Enrichment Framework, and the newly announced School Sport Partnerships approach. This joined-up, bold approach from the government builds on the insights from the SGO Network Review, and we are looking forward to working together to bring this renewed vision to fruition.

Thank you once again for your passion, energy, and commitment. I look forward to seeing even more inspiring work across the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne Moss".

**Joanne Moss
Strategic Lead Children and Young People**

The School Games vision and mission sets out our ambitions for young people. The vision states what we want to achieve, and the mission gives clarity around how this will be achieved. Delivering change locally whilst making a difference nationally is key to the success of the vision and mission being achieved.

Vision

The School Games will make a positive and meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people through sport and physical activity.

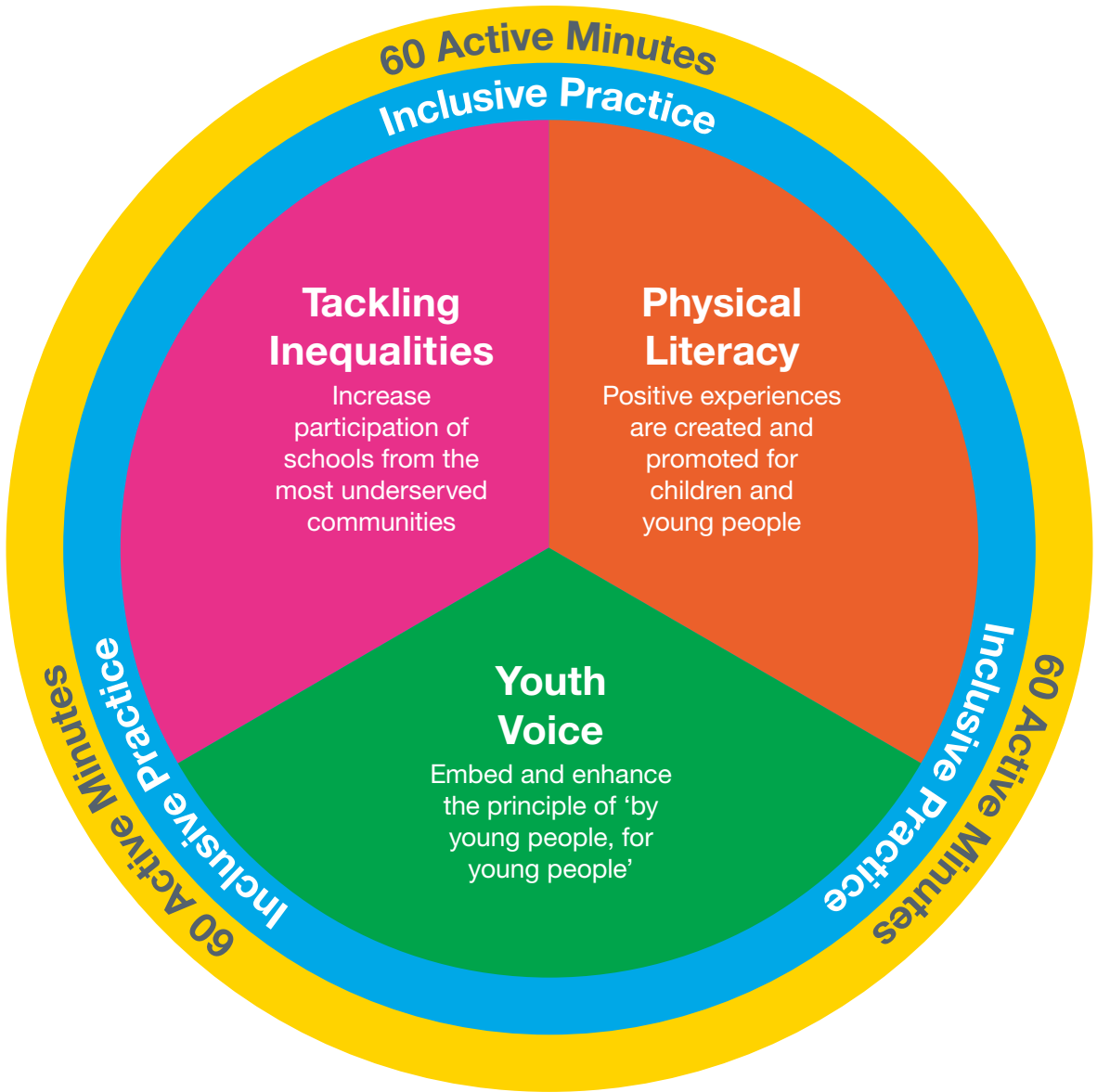
Mission

Putting physical activity and school sport at the heart of schools. Providing young people with the opportunity to enjoy and learn through competition to achieve their personal best.

School Games Pledges

To celebrate the ongoing investment into the School Games, three School Games pledges were shared at the National School Games Summit in June 2023. These pledges set a course to address the national priorities of tackling inequalities, youth voice and physical literacy through the School Games.

They are designed to demonstrate both the agility of the network to ensure School Games remains relevant to the needs of young people and the collective scale, reach, and impact that the funding has made. These pledges are not to be considered in isolation as they are absolutely interdependent – we need to ensure that we hear the voices of those seldom heard if we are to create a life long love of being active for those young people that will benefit the most who have been traditionally missing out. Please consider these as part of your School Games accountability.



The five School Games outcomes ensure that there is a clear direction and a collective ask to the School Games network to work towards the same priorities for young people in Year 3 to 13 across all education settings.

The outcomes for the School Games network to work towards in the 2025/26 are:

1 Advocate and position the delivery of the CMO daily active minutes for all young people, as a universal offer to maintain and grow school engagement¹

Helping schools prioritise the delivery of the Chief Medical Officer's recommended 60 active minutes a day, or 20 minutes a day for SEND students. Supporting improvements in student's physical literacy, and social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

2 Ensure all competition has a clear intent and creates positive experiences based on the motivation, competence and confidence of the young people that need our support the most

Using local insight to target young people who would receive the greatest benefit from involvement in competitions. This includes students from low socio-economic backgrounds, minority ethnic groups, SEND students and girls.

3 Have a clear focus on secondary school engagement and transition points

Prioritising delivery in secondary schools whilst also recognising the impact on students transitioning in early Key Stage 2 and from Key Stage 2 to 3.

4 Support the personal development of targeted young people through youth voice and leadership

This includes opportunities across the full breadth of the School Games which incorporates physical activity, competition, high quality leadership and youth voice.

5 Advocate and engage key stakeholders² on the value of School Games to support local provision and improve the experience for young people and their families

Showing the role the School Games can play in making a meaningful difference to the lives of young people. Encouraging engagement from local stakeholders including senior leadership teams, Public Health and parents.

¹ Schools can be primary, secondary, special, alternative provision, bases/units, and other educational settings inclusive of the independent sector

² Key stakeholders will look different in each SGO area but could include senior leaders in schools, National Governing Bodies of sport, Active Partnerships, schools, local authority, public health, community/voluntary groups, parents

10 Principles of the School Games



The School Games is a national model that is delivered to reflect local needs. It is underpinned by consistent principles and behaviours to achieve the vision, mission and outcomes:

- 1** Tackling local inequalities by working with young people in greatest need
- 2** Ensuring everything that we do is safe, inclusive, accessible and meaningful
- 3** Improving the physical literacy of young people through positive experiences
- 4** Driving equal access by embedding youth voice to give young people a voice, choice and opportunity
- 5** Collaborate, share and learn locally, determining need that reflects local and national agendas
- 6** Celebrating the difference that we are making to young people and sharing through effective storytelling
- 7** Championing the Chief Medical Officer's active minutes guidelines as a universal expectation and supporting schools to reflect this in their provision
- 8** Contributing to school agendas by taking them on our School Games journey and celebrating their engagement through tools such as School Games Mark
- 9** Increasing secondary engagement and opportunities
- 10** Connecting communities and ensuring young people can access appropriate local opportunities

School Games Organiser: Expectations



For 2025/26 School Games Organisers will be required to:

Planning, reporting and learning

Demonstrate a commitment to the School Games by:

- Using the national tool to complete and deliver a development plan covering the current academic year, updated once each term³
- Using the development plan to show how community connections will be made for young people to continue their participation
- Using the events calendar to upload a termly offer of events and activities with a clear intent, updated once each term³
- Using Active Lives, youth voice and other local insight⁴ (i.e. connect with your Active Partnership) to identify young people and schools that would most benefit from a targeted School Games offer
- Developing a case study to show where you have made the most impact against local priorities, and through effective storytelling share your learning locally and nationally
- Collaborating with key partners² to inform the local and county offer to tackle inequalities and ensuring inclusive and safe practice
- Developing strategies to improve knowledge and understanding of the School Games for key stakeholders²
- Prioritising resources to implement meaningful youth voice so young people have a voice and choice of opportunity

School Engagement

- Work with schools to maintain and grow their active engagement⁵ in School Games
- Identify schools that are not engaged and developing strategies to improve this
- Develop a communication plan to boost the profile of the host site and demonstrates the value of school sport to other schools in the area
- Establish a clear method of communication with all schools within the SGO area
- Encourage the use of tools, such as School Games Mark, Inclusive Health Check and Active Lives to help schools better understand their needs
- Planning for and increasing delivery of 60 active minutes for every child.

² Key stakeholders will look different in each SGO area but could include senior leaders in schools, National Governing Bodies of sport, Active Partnerships, schools, Local Authority, public health, community/voluntary groups, parents

³ Creating the 2025/26 development plan by 30 September 2025 and updating within the reporting windows of 8-19 December; 16-27 March and 3-31 July

⁴ e.g. SEND, gender, ethnicity, Pupil Premium, physical activity data, etc.

⁵ Actively engaged schools must demonstrate they have:

- Worked with our SGO on at least one of the School Games outcomes this academic year
- Delivered targeted opportunities for those young people who need it most through the School Games in school and where appropriate attend/engage in our SGOs provision
- Belief in the vision and mission of the School Games and are committed to delivering physical activity and positive experiences for all our young people
- Accessed our School Games dashboard and uploaded information where appropriate on the events calendar

School Games

Organiser: Expectations



Delivery

- Provide an offer of professional development and communication for all schools to increase their understanding and increase their provision of 60 active minutes
- Engage with a minimum of one secondary school to promote 60 active minutes practice, and share this within the county and where appropriate nationally
- Work intensively with a minimum of two low engagement schools to improve their understanding, engagement and access of the School Games offer
- Co-ordinate and signpost schools and young people to a programme of relevant training of leadership, coaching, volunteering and officiating experiences
- Co-design and deliver a broad and balanced School Games offer⁶ that is informed by insight and youth voice and embeds positive experiences. It is expected that an SGO will facilitate a minimum of 12 targeted inter competitions/events/festivals with clear intent.

Professional Development

- Engage in county, regional and national networking by the Youth Sport Trust. This includes face-to-face and virtual support, Development Coach engagement, Coaching Circles (aligned to an area for improvement in your Development Plan), monthly updates and your termly review of your development plan.
- New SGOs are required to attend a national virtual and face-to-face induction during your first year of being appointed (ideally within your first term) and engage with your Development Coach.

⁶ A broad and balanced offer should look to provide a range of sports and activities that are age and stage appropriate, delivered with intent; with a mix of intra/inter; personal challenge, virtual and face to face targeting a range of young people, and includes youth voice and high-quality leadership for personal development

Active Partnership/ London Youth Games: Expectations



There is ongoing flexibility in how the School Games investment into Active Partnerships and London Youth Games (LYG) can be utilised locally. This flexibility will result in variations of the role and remit of an Active Partnership/LYG across the country. The strategic direction, planning and priorities for School Games at both a county and local level should be focused around the shared five School Games Outcomes.

The what: county provision

- To position tackling inequalities at the forefront of county School Games planning, provision and opportunities and seek ways to support SGOs to adopt the same approach locally
- To develop and deliver a county School Games offer informed by insight, youth consultation and collaboration. The look and feel of county provision will vary across the country. It could be the continuation of a county festival, a number of place-based festivals or focused work with targeted schools and young people. Targeted work will be the focus of this investment but there should still be a degree of a universal offer (i.e. 60 Active Minutes, county wide event, online training). Provision will very much depend on local need and insight
- To ensure the local and county School Games offer provides opportunities for young people to take on leadership and volunteering roles with the aspiration that opportunities will engage new and different young leaders
- To advocate to key stakeholders, such as Public Health, Governors, and schools, how the School Games is one of the ways we can make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people
- To ensure that positive experiences are at the heart of planning

The how

- To foster opportunities for strong collaboration with your SGOs, YST Development Coach and/or YST Development Manager
- Understand how the shared five School Games outcomes align and contribute to local CYP priorities
- Put co-design with young people and insight at the heart of all School Games planning and provision. Also work together with SGOs to consider and encourage high quality and accessible exit routes for young people
- Support the SGO network, schools, parents, young people, and wider partners to understand and value how the School Games contributes to tackling inequalities
- Continue to update the School Games dashboard to demonstrate the scale of county provision and share School Games approaches, practice and learning with Sport England and YST through the sharing and learning webinars, termly impact awards and/or end-of-year reviews
- Understand local workforce needs for the School Games and support the development of teachers, SGOs and non-teaching staff

Whilst the School Games will look and feel unique to each area that is served by an SGO and Active Partnership, there are some consistent elements that define the School Games that need to be adhered to. These are the non-negotiables of the School Games.

- Focused on Years 3-13 (i.e. 7-18 year olds)
- Eligible to schools with a DfE number and can be primary, secondary, special, alternative provision, bases/units, and other educational settings inclusive of the independent sector
- Addresses Tackling Inequalities, Youth Voice and Physical Literacy/Positive Experiences
- Embeds collaboration across the School Games network, which includes 3-day a week School Games Organisers, Active Partnerships, National Governing Bodies of Sport, National Disability Sport Organisations and schools
- Collaboration with wider key stakeholders which may look different in each SGO area but could include senior leaders in schools, National Governing Bodies of Sport, National Disability Sports Organisations, public health, community/voluntary groups, parents
- Has tailored local offer reflective of need and provides a broad and balanced range of sports and physical activities that are age and stage appropriate, delivered with intent; with a mix of intra/inter; personal challenge, virtual and face to face targeting a range of young people, and includes youth voice and high-quality leadership for personal development
- Considers diversity and reflects the local needs
- Considers secondary school engagement and impact
- Champions 'reframing competition' – it needs to be about more than a single measure of success and young person experiences matter
- Maximises the School Games 'Spirit of the Games' Values
- Tailored to the different stakeholders and audiences – use the School Games Messaging & Graphic [Templates](#) to help
- Tells a story of the journey of the School Games to engage schools in why it can support their priorities
- Clear where the School Games fits in the local landscape
- Demonstrates the impact of the School Games and how it makes a difference locally and nationally.
- Minimises environmental impact

School Games Tools and Support



We have lots of tools to support colleagues within the School Games. This is not an exhaustive list but headlines some of the key tools.

School Games Website – www.yourschoolgames.com

This is our School Games website and has two elements to it; the public facing site and then the 'logged-in' dashboards. Each school, School Games Organiser, Active Partnership and National Governing Body of Sport has access to their own dashboard that contains links to all the key resources and additional tools such as events calendars, development plans and School Games Mark to name a few.

School Games Events Calendar

Embedded within dashboards, the events calendar captures both SGOs and Active Partnerships intended provision and uptake over an academic year. Colleagues are required to keep this up to date and input post event attendance on a regular basis but as a minimum termly. This tool helps us to evidence the scale and reach of the network and is shared with partners including Sport England, Government departments, National Governing Bodies of Sport and National Disability Sport Organisations on a termly basis. Noting that NGBs can access this as live data to see where they can support provision accordingly.

SGO Development Plan

The purpose of completing the annual development plan is for an SGO to think about and put into writing what they feel they will be able to put in place in their 3-day a week role during the academic year to achieve the School Games Vision and Mission.

The SGO development plan is available via dashboards and should be used to capture your evidence of need each year to then shape and plan annual activity to deliver across the School Games outcomes and expectations. The plan takes you through intent, implementation and intended impact for each action and progress should be recorded regularly and as part of your termly reporting. A [development plan guide](#) and support resources are available.

Inclusive Health Check

This is an interactive tool that has been designed in partnership with the Activity Alliance and allows you to self-review your provision of inclusive School Games opportunities. The Inclusive Health Check is an annual self-review tool available to all School Games registered schools, School Games Organisers (SGOs), and Active Partnerships. It allows its users to improve best practice, access key resources, and develop an action plan.

School Games Tools and Support



School Games Mark

This tool is designed to reward and recognise a school's engagement (provision and uptake) in the School Games against a national benchmark and to celebrate them keeping young people active.

There are four levels of award and as introduced in 2023/24, schools will continue to be asked to reflect on the inclusiveness of their provision both within the curriculum and beyond through the lens of gender parity amongst other questions.

School Games Mark will recognise and reward schools who can demonstrate they provide voice, choice, and equal opportunity to young people on a progressive scale that will grow year on year.

Lead Inclusion Schools

Lead Inclusion Schools champion high-quality, inclusive PE, sport, and physical activity for all young people with SEND. They support teachers and school staff to embed inclusive practices, create inspiring opportunities, and raise aspirations through accessible and meaningful leadership experiences. To find out who your lead inclusion school is, contact send@youthsporttrust.org

Development Coaches

These are specialists in the education and sports sector employed by Youth Sport Trust to provide high quality professional coaching to School Games Organisers to support you with your role. To find out more or to request Development Coach support, contact developmentcoach@youthsporttrust.org

Coaching Circles

Coaching Circles provide an opportunity for a focused discussion to drive innovation and learning on a specific theme or priority. They have been designed to enable you to share your current practice, highlight any challenges within your locality and combat these through the creation of ideas and a group strategy to improve outcomes.

School Games Tools and Support



Major Events

The Ashes (Men)	Cricket	Australia, 21 November – 8 January
Australian Open	Tennis	Australia, 12 January – 1 February
Six Nations (Men)	Rugby Union	Multiple, 5 February – 14 March
Winter Olympics	Winter Sports	Italy, 6 – 22 February
ICC T20 World Cup (Men)	Cricket	India & Sri Lanka, 8 February – 8 March
Super Bowl LX (Men)	American Football	USA, 8 February
World Classic	Baseball	USA, 5 – 17 March
Winter Paralympics	Winter Sports	Italy, 6 – 15 March
IAAF World Indoor Championship	Athletics	Poland, 20 – 22 March
Masters	Golf	USA, 9 – 12 April
Six Nations (Women)	Rugby Union	Multiple, 11 April – 17 May
World Team Championships	Table Tennis	UK, 28 April – 10 May
Giro d'Italia	Cycling	Italy, May – June
French Open	Tennis	France, 24 May – 7 June
FIFA World Cup (Men)	Football	Canada, USA & Mexico, 11 June – 19 July
ICC T20 Cricket World Cup (Women)	Cricket	UK, 12 June – 5 July
Wimbledon Championships	Tennis	UK, 29 June – 12 July
Tour de France	Cycling	Spain & France, 4 July – TBA
Commonwealth Games	Multisport	UK, 23 July – 2 August
World Championship (Women)	Lacrosse	Japan, 24 July – 2 August
FEI World Championship	Equestrian	Germany, 11 – 23 August
FIH World Cup (Men)	Hockey	Belgium & Netherlands, 14 – 30 August
US Open	Tennis	USA, 30 August – 13 September
FIBA Basketball World Cup (Women)	Basketball	Germany, 4 – 13 September
World Athletics Ultimate Championships	Athletics	Hungary, 11 – 13 September
Summer Youth Olympics	Multisport	Senegal, 30 October – 13 November

Key dates



To support your planning and to meet the needs of your communities and young people attending your events and activities please view this [Diversity and Inclusion Calendar](#).

Autumn Term

Welcome Back Webinar	09 September	10:00 – 11:00 am
Coaching Circles Termly Book here		
National Virtual Induction	11 September	11:00 – 12:00 pm
School Games Mark Verification (for SGOs)	17 September	
School Games Consultation Group	18 September	Full day
Lead Inclusion School Connect	22 September	Full day
SGO Development Plans 25/26 (created & updated)	30 September	
Black History Month	October	
Positive Experience Changemakers	01 October	1:00 – 3:00 pm
National Induction (face to face)	02 & 03 October	Full days
Line Manager Termly Briefing	07 October	4:00 – 5:00 pm
NGB / NDSO Networking	08 October	Full day
International Day of the Girl	11 October	
School Games Mark SIRC external validation visits completed	24 October	
South West Regional Conference (Bristol)	04 November	Full day
South Regional Conference (London)	05 November	Full day
North Regional Conference (Leeds)	11 November	Full day
Midlands Regional Conference (Coventry)	12 November	Full day
World Childrens Day	20 November	
International Day of Disabled Persons	03 December	
Impact Award Application Deadline	19 December	
SGO Reporting	08 – 19 December	

Key dates



Spring Term

Welcome Back Webinar	07 January	11:00 – 12:00pm
Coaching Circles Termly Book here		
NGB Format Webinars Termly Book here		
School Games Consultation Group	08 January	Full day
National Virtual Induction	13 January	11:00 – 12:00pm
Inclusion Live	26 – 30 January	
Line Manager Termly Briefing	27 January	4:00 – 5:00 pm
County Meetings	Dates to be set locally (prior to Feb half-term)	Half day
National Induction (face to face)	04 & 05 February	Full days
Children's Mental Health Week	09 – 15 February	
International Women's Day	08 March	
NGB / NDSO Networking	11 March	Full day
Nutrition and Hydration Week	16 – 22 March	
SGO Reporting	16 – 27 March	
Impact Award Application Deadline	27 March	
World Autism Acceptance Week	02 – 08 April	
International Day for Sport Development	06 April	

Summer Term

Welcome Back Webinar	21 April	11:00 – 12:00pm
National Virtual Induction	28 April	11:00 – 12:00pm
Positive Experience Changemakers	29 April	1:00 – 3:00 pm
School Games Mark Opens	29 April	Full day
School Games Consultation Group	30 April	Full day
Line Manager Termly Briefing	05 May	4:00 – 5:00 pm
National Induction (face to face)	06 & 07 May	Full days
Mental Health Awareness Week	12 – 18 May	
International Day of the Boy	16 May	
Line Manager Briefing (regional)	TBC	
Impact Award Annual Celebration	02 June	Evening
National Summit	03 June	Full day
World Environment Day	05 June	
International Day of Play	11 June	
National School Sports Week	15 – 19 June (provisional dates)	
SGO Reporting	03 – 31 July	
School Games Mark Closes	31 July	
Impact Award Application Deadline	31 July	
Case Study (for SGOs)	31 July	

Key contacts



General Enquiries

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Regional Enquiries

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