

CASE STUDY

NOT JUST SPORT

LEVEL 3 SCHOOL GAMES FESTIVAL CASE STUDY KENT



INTRODUCTION

Most of the pilot School Games activity concentrated on Level 3, i.e. multi-sport festivals for the whole area. In Kent the festival took place at seven venues in June 2011; 770 young people participated, representing 76 schools, mostly from primary and secondary schools, although 24 special needs young people represented six special schools.

The festival featured 12 activities, including new age kurling for the special needs participants. Chris Cook, champion swimmer, was the star guest. One particular aspect of the School Games Level 3 event was the amount of effort that was placed into making the day an event for all, thriving with extra activities to allow something for everyone, not just the individuals taking part in the sports themselves. The following case study will look into some of the aspects of the Games that made the event a huge success.



CO-ORDINATION

The Local Organising Committee (LOC) included a wide array of representation, from schools, Kent County Council, a National Governing Body for sport, the Youth Sport Trust, and the local County Sport Partnership (CSP) and school sport partnership. This group ensured that the School Games were planned using existing networks for schools and sport, which helped the speed with which the Games were organised.

DELIVERY

Partner organisations contributed very effectively to the activities in the Games. All School Games events rely enormously on the commitment of headteachers to add to the value of sport competitions, as well as the dedication of support teachers, especially PE teachers, in making sure that young people are enthusiastic about the events, keen to participate, and turn up on the day!

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

The Level 3 competition was a roaring success; organisers believe that this was very much due to not only the sporting competitions running smoothly, but also the extra workshop activities that were in place to allow spectators to have plenty of fun and be involved in the day.

There were a number of workshop activities that ran across the course of the day. One local primary school teacher wrote an Olympic themed song. One particular workshop ran all day so all the young people not taking part in sports competitions learnt the lyrics to the song, which culminated in the children singing the song during the closing ceremony. Olympic swimmer Chris Cook spent some of the day teaching young people about the Olympic pledges, which were then read out by young

people during the closing ceremony. This acted as a great tool through which to help teach the young people about the values associated with sporting events such as the Olympics, highlighting why events such as the School Games actually take place. The Kent CSP lead stated: “Our feeling was that the sports events would go well anyway and they did; but for the first time there were mascots for the teams and that went well because they had a mascot race which kept everyone entertained”.

It was additional activities such as these that allowed the event to be enjoyed by all concerned. “I think it was the additional bits around the edges for us that seemed to go really well. It gave us an opportunity to experiment with a few things; which was great.” (CSP lead).

YOUNG PEOPLE OUTCOMES

There is no doubt that the large majority of young participants enjoyed the School Games. 62 primary school students from the area completed a survey and all stated that they enjoyed the School Games events. The things they liked were representing the school and playing against other people from their school and people from other schools.

When asked to describe their experience at the Games, the most common words the event participants from primary schools used were “happy”, “excited” and “proud”. “Happy” was also the most common description of how they felt after the events, followed by “I wanted to play again”. Most of them agreed that playing in the School Games events had made them feel more confident in themselves.

All but two of the young people surveyed wanted to participate in more sports competitions in the future. Over half of these



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had seen new sports at the events which they would like to play. Whilst two-thirds of these young people described themselves as “very sporty” and already belonged to sports clubs outside of school, another 22% were not members of sports clubs but would like to be.

When asked what they did not like about the School Games events, the most common response from the primary school survey respondents was “nothing”; although the next most popular response was “too much waiting between Games/competitions”.

When asked what would improve the events, the most popular request was for “more sports on offer to compete in”. Other popular demands were for more team Games and more individual Games.