

CASE STUDY

ENGAGING ALL SCHOOLS

LEVEL 3 SCHOOL GAMES FESTIVAL CASE STUDY CENTRAL LONDON



SCHOOL
GAMES

INTRODUCTION

Most of the pilot School Games activity concentrated on Level 3, i.e. multi-sport festivals for the whole area. In Central London, the festival took place on 1 July 2011, at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre. The festival featured 8 able bodied activities and two disability activities – boccia and athletics. Olympian Gail Emms and Paralympian David Weir attended alongside the Mayor of London Boris Johnson and the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport Jeremy Hunt. One aspect of the School Games that stood out in Central London was the fantastic role the LOC and schools in the area played in promoting and profiling events within schools to young people in order to make the event a huge success. The following case study highlights some of the reasons why Central London was particularly triumphant in this area.



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CO-ORDINATION

The Local Organising Committee (LOC) included a wide array of representation, from schools, Central London Pro Active County Sport Partnership, representatives from the school sport network, local authority representatives, specialist disability sport and the CEO of London Youth Games. The group were able to utilise existing School Sport Partnership networks which allowed them to engage five independent schools to take part in the School Games.

DELIVERY

The overall delivery of the School Games was enhanced through working in partnership with the London Youth Games Foundation. Funding for the School Games was managed by the London Youth Games as they provided the entire infrastructure including facilities and volunteers. As a well developed structure already existed the LOC focussed its efforts on improving the network of schools that compete in sport within Central London. Much of this work has been undertaken by the school sport network who with the Youth Games organisers have played a significant role in the delivery of the School Games.

PROMOTION OF THE SCHOOL GAMES

To ensure a School Games event is a success, it is important that the scheme is advertised to schools in the correct way in order to not only grab their attention, but also provide the necessary information to allow them to get involved and understand the goals of the School Games.

Schools can raise the profile of the School Games by utilising some of the associated Youth Sport Trust programmes. Placing the posters and banners around the school helped advertise the events, whilst many schools benefitted from assigning time within assemblies to spread the message to the whole school on the Olympics and the School Games. Many schools have links on school PE websites with information about the School Games, whilst letters that are sent out by the school have the School Games logo on the letterhead. Techniques such as these are fantastic methods by that help to raise the profile of the School Games.

Schools have reported that some of the success in promoting the School Games to young people was through dedicating time within the sport and PE curriculum to School Games activities. Whilst in many schools Level 1 School Games competitions were basically considered as school sports day only, schools that did embed School Games activities into the curriculum throughout the course of the year believed it provided students with a greater understanding and awareness of the scheme and the values associated with it.

It is important that a Local Organising Committee not only contains a set of individuals that can provide the necessary support to ensure the School Games is a success, but they should also be from a background that

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allows them to return to their professional roles and disseminate information on the School Games to help publicise it. Many believe the ideal candidate for the position of LOC Chair is a headteacher; they are familiar with school operations and are also comfortable in chairing meetings which is essential for the role. It is also important to have representation from a number of different stakeholders; including individuals from the school sport network, local authority representatives, teachers from differing local schools (primary, secondary and independent school representation is necessary). The representatives can be sought through existing connections, or by advertising for posts through the appropriate channels.

The funding of the Schools Games is something that should be agreed by all members of the LOC. Each area will be different in terms of facility hire, opening ceremony plans, and publicity requirements such as promotional t-shirts and certificates.

One of the major challenges experienced within the School Games pilot was actually getting the information to young people. The key is to establish (if they are not already in place) regular and quality links between schools, clubs and other providers. Establishing an information portal that could be utilised by all stakeholders and young people would be a perfect method by which to promote the School Games and also disseminate the necessary information needed for people to take part and get involved.

YOUNG PEOPLE OUTCOMES

Young people who participated in focus groups during the event all enjoyed the School Games because it was an opportunity to compete against other schools and “challenge” themselves against their opponents. The participants also wanted to compete “more often” in “more sports” during the School Games while some felt the opportunity to meet new friends was also important.

Nineteen spectators who were surveyed during the School Games enjoyed the event as they thought it was “big” and “well organised”. Over 60% of spectators felt more favourably about school sport after attending the School Games event in Central London.