

Factsheet 3: Use of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games to inspire pupils and young people

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During December 2010 to February 2011 teaching staff and pupils/students were interviewed as part of a wider study commissioned by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) now Department for Education (DfE) to explore whether schools and colleges were using the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values to help deliver the objectives for **School Sport and Physical Education (PE)** and if so, how.

This factsheet outlines some of the findings from the Case Study element of the study which explored eight School Sports Partnerships^[1] (SSPs) in England. It provides examples of how the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are being used to inspire pupils and young people. The full report is available from the DfE website:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/RSG/AllRsgPublications/Page2/DFE-RR109>

Visits To Venues

Staff highlighted the importance of 'bringing the London 2012 Games to the kids' to make it more real and relevant for them. Suggestions as to how this had been achieved included arranging a trip to a nearby Olympic or Paralympic venue. Pupils expressed pride and excitement about visiting these venues.

"It's good to know that it's happening in the UK because sometimes you can drive past it and know something good's happening around you [...] wow it's really happening [...] people from all over the world are coming here to do sport"
(Pupil, secondary school)

Links with Olympians and Paralympians

Links with and visits by Olympic and Paralympic athletes had taken place in many of the schools. Visiting athletes were viewed positively by both staff and the pupils/students as they provided an opportunity to demonstrate that most athletes are 'ordinary' people who had worked hard to succeed in their discipline.

Schools in one area had a visit from a potential wheelchair basketball Paralympian and he was spoken about by staff and pupils with a great deal of admiration. According to staff, following this visit they received many requests from the pupils for their own wheelchairs to play wheelchair basketball.

"They practiced seated basketball and that was very inspiring for them because a lot of them wanted to go back and buy the wheelchairs!"
(Staff member, primary school)

School Sport Partnerships are families of secondary, special and primary schools and FE colleges working together to increase the quality of sporting opportunities through the curriculum, after-school activities, inter-school competitions and school to club links



International links

A few schools had created links with schools outside of the UK and one school used their link with a Sri Lankan school in particularly innovative ways to learn about their sporting activities. Each school had chosen a sporting activity which they had then taught to the other school via video links and email. This showed the schools how similar school sports were across the world and allowed them to interact with pupils from a very different background.

Notice boards

Some schools had dedicated notice boards with a countdown towards the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games in 2012. These often included Get Set materials such as the Olympic and Paralympic Values or images of athletes. The notice boards were said to provide visual reminders for the children about the timeline and the Values as well as a space where activities could be advertised and reported back on.

Olympic Values leadership award

own school or across the partnership. Pupils were given points for achieving one of the Olympic and Paralympic Values (respect, excellence, friendship, courage, determination, inspiration and equality) and these points were recorded. The pupils with the most points in each category at the end of the term were rewarded. This activity aimed to reward not only excellence in sport but also excellence in important Values such as friendship and respect.

Young ambassadors

The popularity of the Young Ambassador programme with the secondary and primary school pupils was highlighted. For the Young Ambassadors it provided an opportunity to prove themselves outside of the classroom or sport field and can involve those who do not achieve in other ways. It was felt that fellow pupils listened to them as they were peers giving advice or organising events rather than teachers. A number of staff mentioned the positive impact such roles had on previously poorly achieving, badly behaved pupils or those with minimal self-confidence.

"The type of stuff they do is amazingthey've talked to the head ...they just can articulate the issues really well."

(Staff member, secondary school)

Multiculturalism

One school had introduced an activity during the Football World Cup which effectively incorporated both exercise and links with other countries. Each class were given a team and followed the progress of that team throughout the tournament. They also played football against the other classes. They were planning to introduce a new version for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

Values

One observed PE lesson involved a combination of exercise stations (to do particular exercises and then move onto the next station) with 'Values' where pupils had to fill in their understanding of each value. This was then discussed as a group at the end of the lesson. The pupils were engaged throughout and generally had a good understanding of the meanings of each value.



