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## Schools' and Colleges' engagement with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: PE and Sport

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### 1. Introduction and methodology

The then Department for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education - DfE) commissioned TNS-BMRB to conduct research to explore whether schools and colleges were using the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and their respective Values to help deliver their objectives for *School Sport and Physical Education (PE)*, and if so how.

The DfE is the Government body with responsibility for the educational legacy of the London 2012 Games. The DfE works closely with LOCOG who are responsible for the delivery of Get Set, the London 2012 Education Programme.

Get Set is designed for schools and colleges across the UK and is delivered through an online interactive web platform ([www.london2012.com/getset](http://www.london2012.com/getset)). It provides a range of opportunities and resources targeted at 3-19 year olds which can be used to enhance young people's learning through sport, culture and education.

The research consisted of three elements:

- **Teacher survey**, comprising 1500 telephone interviews with teachers<sup>1</sup> in primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and Further Education (FE) colleges.
- **Pupil survey (conducted in school/colleges)**, comprising 1264 self-completion questionnaires from 48 schools (primary and secondary) and 7 FE colleges.

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<sup>1</sup> Interviews were mainly conducted with Sports Coordinators in secondary schools and FE colleges and Primary and Special School Link teachers.

- **Qualitative case studies**, at a School Sport Partnership level, involving Sport Development Officers (SDOs), head teachers, Partnership Development Managers (PDMs), Secondary School Sport Coordinators (SSCos), Primary Link Teachers (PLTs), Special School Link teachers (SSLTs), Further Education School Sport Co-coordinators' (FESCos) and pupils/students.

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.

## 2. Key Findings

### 2.1 Background to Get Set - how do schools and colleges participate in Get Set?

Get Set is the official London 2012 education programme. Through 'Get Set', LOCOG (the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games) provides a range of opportunities and resources targeted at 3-19 year olds which can be used to enhance young people's learning through sport, culture and education. Sport and PE is one of the strands of 'Get Set'. Half of the teachers surveyed said their school or college was registered with Get Set (52%).

Schools and colleges that were registered<sup>2</sup> with Get Set showed higher levels of involvement and engagement with the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values:

- 83% were involved in events or activities linked to the London 2012 Games (compared with 62% who are not registered or did not know whether they were registered)
- 37% had introduced new school sport activities (compared with 25% of schools not registered)
- 20% of Get Set registered schools said that the Olympic and Paralympic Values had influenced activities a great deal or quite a lot during the last and current school year (compared with 14%)
- 39% said that the Olympic and Paralympic Values have inspired lesson planning and been integrated into lessons (compared with 26%).

Among schools not registered with Get Set, 44% had heard of Get Set before being interviewed. The majority of schools who were aware of Get Set but not registered, were planning to register with Get Set before the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (75%).

Of those teachers who said their school was registered with Get Set, just over a quarter were in the Get Set network (27%, 14% of all schools and colleges). Schools which were part of the Get

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<sup>2</sup> Every school can register with Get Set. Schools which opt to become network schools gain access to exclusive rewards and opportunities.

Set network showed even higher levels of involvement and engagement with Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values.

Half of all teachers in schools and colleges registered with Get Set had made use of the website, including looking for ideas for school activities such as assemblies and downloading resources for PE and sport and other lessons.

Teachers who said their school was registered on Get Set or were aware of Get Set were asked if their school had been involved in any Get Set+ partner programmes. Overall, just under a quarter of teachers surveyed (22%) said they were aware that their school/college was involved in one or more of these programmes, including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), challenges and enterprise activities connected to the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

## **2.2 To what extent are the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values influencing the PE and Sport activities offered to pupils by schools and colleges?**

Levels of school engagement and participation were classified by segmentation, drawing participation levels from the proportion of pupils (not including FE students) that participate in at least three hours of PE and school sport per week, and engagement levels from key questions on the teacher survey<sup>3</sup>. Engagement was found to be higher at secondary schools than at primaries, although participation levels in school sport did not vary by school type.

Schools in the more engaged segments (more engaged/low participation and more engaged/high participation) were more likely to be registered with Get Set, be members of the Get Set network, to include the whole school in Olympic and Paralympic-related events and to have introduced new sporting activities, even where school sport participation in school was low.

Two-thirds of schools and colleges had been involved in at least one Olympic or Paralympic event during the 2009/10 academic year (66%), with almost all secondary schools having done so (96%). The event that had the most involvement was the Lloyds TSB National School Sports Week (52%), which was also the event most likely to have been promoted as a London 2012-related activity.

Among schools and colleges involved in any Olympic and Paralympic-related events, just over half had involved the whole school/college in these events (52%) and around a quarter had involved specific year groups (24%). Only a very small proportion of schools had restricted

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<sup>3</sup> Whether events and activities were promoted as Olympic or Paralympic activities within the school; whether the Olympic and Paralympic Values had inspired lesson planning and been; and the extent to which the Olympic and Paralympic Values influenced activities during the last school year.

participation to just those pupils who were most involved in school sport and PE or studying for a sport- related qualification.

Case studies indicated that awareness of the upcoming Olympic Games and Paralympic Games amongst partnership staff was high and in most cases they were also aware of the Get Set programme, but interest varied across the eight partnerships. Almost all of the secondary schools had introduced new sport and were involved with schemes that had existed prior to their incorporation into the Get Set Programme such as Lloyds TSB National School Sport Week and the Young Ambassadors programme. However, only a handful of schools had introduced their own PE/sport Olympic and Paralympic activities, links with Olympians or Paralympians or activities in the general curriculum. Variation did not appear to be linked to scores on participation rates or proximity to an Olympic site as anticipated. Instead, having a passionate, active champion to steer the programme forward was viewed as the biggest driving factor – most often the PDM, SSCO or a head teacher.

Awareness of the Olympic Games among pupils was almost universal (96%), with awareness of the Paralympic Games and that the London 2012 Games is to be held in London also high. For primary pupils, the best things about the London 2012 Games being held in London were 'It will get more people to take part in sport' (27%), 'Can go to watch it' (20%) and 'Having famous sports stars in the country' (19%).

For secondary pupils and FE students the key benefits were: 'It promotes sport and fitness' (44%), 'It will get more people to take part in sport' (33%) and 'It is good for the UK' (30%).

### **2.3 Are schools and colleges using the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values to support their PE and School sport objectives to increase take up of sporting opportunities?**

Three in ten of schools and colleges surveyed (31%) had introduced new school and college sport activities because of involvement with Get Set or London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic related events and activities. Involvement in events and activities related to the London 2012 Games showed a link to the introduction of new sport, with more than a third of schools and colleges that were involved in Olympic or Paralympic-inspired events also having introduced new sport. Of schools that had introduced new school sports, the majority of teachers (88%) felt that these were an effective way of involving children who were usually less engaged with sport and PE, with 44% thinking that they were very effective.

Two-thirds of pupils reported having tried new sports (63%) at school in the last school year; this was highest among primary school pupils (74%). Four in ten pupils said that they had learnt or done an activity related to the Olympic Games or Paralympic Games in the last school year (39%), again higher among primary school pupils. Of those who reported learning or doing an activity linked to the Olympic Games or Paralympic Games, six in ten said this took place during

Physical Education and Sport (PE and Sport) lessons (62%) and a third reported learning about the London 2012 Games in other lessons (32%), including history/ geography, PSHE/ citizenship and Design Technology or ICT).

Case studies showed limited evidence that the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games were being promoted in a cross-curricular manner. However, staff felt that the 2011/2012 academic year would see a greater focus on the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games across the entire curriculum including maths, geography, and humanities. Pupils in primary schools were particularly likely to think that learning about the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games made lessons more fun (62%).

The case studies highlighted other ways in which the London 2012 Games had been utilised including Olympic Games and Paralympic Games notice boards, Olympic and Paralympic values, leadership awards and the creation of links with Olympic and Paralympic athletes.

#### **2.4 Have the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values and related activities impacted on pupils attitudes to PE and sport?**

All pupils participating in the survey were shown a list of words and phrases, which included the seven Values and asked which came to mind when thinking about the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. 'Competition' was the word which most came to mind followed by 'skills'. Neither of these were one of the Olympic or Paralympic Values. The Value most frequently associated with the Olympic and Paralympic Games amongst Secondary and FE pupils was 'determination'.

The three Olympic Values – friendship, respect and excellence and the four Paralympic Values – courage, determination, inspiration and equality have inspired lesson planning and have been integrated into lessons, activities and events in around a third of schools and FE colleges (33%). Those that had integrated the Values, were more likely to have done so across both PE and sport related lessons and in other areas of the curriculum. Where the Values had been integrated into school sport, this was most likely to have occurred through lessons or curriculum themed around the Values, and during teamwork and group games in PE.

Teachers were also asked more directly about the extent to which the Olympic and Paralympic Values have influenced activities in their school and were likely to continue to do so in the future:

- in the last and current school year (2010/11) - to establish a baseline
- in the next school year 2011/12, which is the year of the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (when it would be expected that the impact would be greatest)
- in the longer term – to examine the extent to which teachers felt the impact of London 2012 Games and Values would be sustained in the future

Over half of teachers surveyed felt the Olympic and Paralympic Values have already influenced activities, to at least some extent, in the last and current school year (61% saying a great deal, quite a lot or a little). Most schools expect that the Olympic and Paralympic Values will have the biggest influence in the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games year (97%). Almost universally, teachers anticipate that the influence on activities will continue in the longer term (94%). However, the extent of influence was expected to fall back, with only 13% feeling it would have a great deal of influence, compared with 32% in the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games year.

According to the survey, schools that have experienced the greatest amount of influence, and who anticipate that the Olympic and Paralympic Values would influence activities in the longer term were those involved in Olympic and Paralympic-inspired events, those that had introduced new school sport activities and schools in the Get Set network.

Most teachers surveyed felt that there were benefits of being involved in Olympic and Paralympic related PE and sport activities (94%). Two-thirds of pupils and students said they enjoyed PE and sport at school and college and half of pupils really enjoyed learning about sport in general. Half of pupils and students thought that involvement in sport and other activities connected to the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games would improve their confidence and communication skills and six in ten that it would improve what they feel they can do and achieve.

Teachers in schools and FE colleges felt that the majority of their pupils and students were interested and engaged with the Olympic and Paralympic Games and/or Values (80% saying a great deal, quite a lot or a little), and a third of pupils reported being excited.

## **2.5 Are there any challenges related to using the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Values to support their PE and School Sport objectives to increase take-up of sporting opportunities?**

Partnership staff highlighted numerous drivers for encouraging schools and colleges to participate in Olympic and Paralympic inspired activities and the Get Set programme including allocated time and resources for PE and sport, creation of links with out-of-school clubs, availability of teaching materials on the Get Set website, and opportunities for '*non-sporty*' pupil involvement such as through the Young Ambassadors programme.

By far the biggest driver for PE teachers was said to be the motivation and support of the senior management team, primarily the PDM and the Head teachers. A further key driver identified was having a PDM "*who can see the bigger picture*" rather than focusing only on individual schools or only on school sport.

In terms of challenges, PDMs highlighted the difficulties of fulfilling their wide remit and that the introduction of new initiatives, while viewed as exciting, placed further burden on their already stretched time and resources. Complaints in relation to a lack of support, guidance and monitoring from their SDO were expressed by a number of the PDMs.

SSCOs highlighted the difficulties of fulfilling their responsibilities in relation to the partnership role within the time allocated (two days per week). Get Set was principally introduced to schools by the SSCOs. They highlighted a number of challenges to implementation of the scheme: 1) SSCOs themselves often felt they had limited information about Get Set; 2) a lack of drive or enthusiasm from Head teachers; 3) minimal available time and apathetic responses on the part of teaching staff and 4) a belief that this was the role of PE teachers.

Concerns were expressed about a perceived lack of clarity regarding the positioning of the Get Set programme and whether it should be viewed as a school wide programme of activity or an ad hoc teaching tool.

When asked to what extent the Olympic and Paralympic-related activities and Values could be sustained following the London 2012 Games, strong views were expressed regarding the need to maintain such initiatives. Throughout the discussions the multiple perceived benefits and positive impact of the programme on pupils and students were highlighted. However, the lack of certainty regarding the future of the partnerships has led to demoralisation amongst partnership staff and was therefore the primary focus when discussing sustainability. Doubts were expressed that the current activities would be able to continue once the resources were diminished. It was felt that without the SSP, schools' focus on school sport and the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games would diminish resulting in an expression of short-term patriotism rather than a lasting legacy.

## **2.6 Do schools and colleges make links between the PE and Sport strand of the education programme and other strands?**

The majority of teachers interviewed in schools involved with Get Set+ partner programmes said that the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games had encouraged links between PE and sport and other elements of the curriculum to at least some extent (88% saying a little, quite a lot or a great deal).

One in ten of schools thought that the London 2012 Games had encouraged a strong linkage. There were no significant differences between primary and secondary schools in the extent of links to other areas of the curriculum, and very low numbers of FE colleges and special schools were asked this question due to lack of involvement with Get Set+ partner programmes.

Schools where Olympic and Paralympic Values had inspired lesson planning and been integrated into lessons were also more likely to say that the Olympic Games has encouraged

links across subjects (95% 'a little, quite a lot or a great deal compared with 80% of schools where Values had not been integrated into lessons).

PE and sport was linked with a number of subjects across the curriculum in particular with science (44%) and maths (43%).

The pattern of linkages typically reflected subjects taught in schools; secondary schools had greater linkage with subjects such as design and technology and foreign languages and within FE Colleges links were higher with business studies, enterprise and lifelong learning.





### **Additional Information**

The full report can be accessed at <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/>

Further information about this research can be obtained from  
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

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This research report was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.