

Putting youth voice and co-creation at the heart of the B2022 School Games investment



Top Tips and toolkits

In the 2021/22 academic year, Sport England have invested an additional £2m into the School Games as the centrepiece of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Legacy. Active Partnerships and SGOs are working together locally to determine how best to utilise this additional investment to support children and young people to be active through B2022-inspired School Games opportunities. Insight and youth voice are central pillars to this legacy investment, especially hearing, listening and responding to new and different youth voices to co-create CWG-inspired opportunities.

The principles of this investment are three-fold:

- 1 To use the inspiration and profile of the B2022 Commonwealth Games to engage new and different children and young people in the School Games with a clear focus on tackling inequalities
- 2 To position positive experiences of sport and physical activity at the heart of any Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games-inspired opportunities to ensure it makes a meaningful difference to the children and young people who need it most
- 3 To use the principles of collaboration, insight, youth voice and co-design as a catalyst of change in reframing the School Games both nationally and locally



Making the case for youth voice and co-creation

“A strong focus on student voice to shape delivery has resulted in offering activities that were chosen by students and revising the curriculum based on student interests. There has been a significant focus on individual, non-competitive and non-traditional activities, especially for less engaged students”

“The need for changes to curriculum and extra-curricular delivery has been identified through an intensive focus on student voice within schools. Giving students a stronger voice to design and influence the activities on offer has been achieved through surveying and through the empowerment of student groups such as ambassadors and sports councils”

Youth voice and co-creation toolkits

There is a wealth of existing toolkits available online to support SGOs and Active Partnerships to place youth voice at the heart of their CWG planning and design and indeed their wider School Games provision. To save re-inventing the wheel and creating a CWG-specific toolkit, here are two toolkits which might be helpful to explore as you implement your own local approaches to youth voice and co-creation, there are many other toolkits.

-  **Voice Opportunity Power:** A toolkit to involve young people in the making and managing of their neighbourhood
-  **Inclusion 2020: Youth Voice Toolkit:** A Youth Voice toolkit to support practitioners in a range of ways to engage student voice in their school, representative of a diverse community of pupils.

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Top Tips and toolkits

Youth voice and co-creation top tips

Diversity and lived experiences

Try to involve new and different voices into the conversation that are reflective of the school and local population. Use local data such as the Active Lives Children and Young People insights to understand which young people you want to engage, and find ways to make sure their voices and lived experiences are heard and valued.

Scale

Numbers do matter, and consideration should be given to the size and set-up of the conversation to encourage all young people to feel comfortable enough to contribute (see the Inclusion 2020: Youth Voice Toolkit for ideas)

Be creative and engaging

Try to make the sessions fun, engaging and interesting. Incorporate some creative tasks such as designing their own fun CWG-inspired opportunity. Invite and encourage young people to co-design the sessions with you.

Be comfortable with the unknowns

These sessions are designed to create the space for young people to reflect, discuss and explore. Be prepared to come away with some unknowns and unanswered questions.

Create the right conditions

You may have session plans, but try to go where the energy is and keep the sessions fairly fluid and relaxed. Build in plenty of space and time for young people to generate ideas together. Also try to be clear about any boundaries you are working within (e.g. time, budget, venue). Once young people know these, they can be realistic in their expectations but still be creative.

Check understanding

Find ways to play back the key messages, consensus and ideas with young people, and consider how they can continue to be involved in the co-design of opportunities.

Other insights

To complement the sessions, draw on available insights such as the Active Lives Children and Young People Survey or the Girls Active Survey to better understand attitudes and behaviours to sport and physical activity.