

School Games Case Study: Cirencester Kingshill School

A focus on providing equal opportunities



INTRODUCTION

Cirencester Kingshill Secondary School is based in Gloucestershire, and is a school which aims to create opportunities for the development of each young person's character, where the wider school experience is used to raise aspirations, to broaden knowledge and skills. They are the host site for the School Games Organiser (SGO) in Cirencester. Upon a change in personnel for the SGO role in September 2024 (after having had the same SGO for more than 10 years), a review of the programme offered at the host school was conducted by the new SGO against the back drop of the equal opportunities agenda. Their review outlined that the girls' PE and extracurricular sport provision at the school was not as broad and varied when compared to the provision for boys. There was a narrower range of sports on offer for girls (primarily limited to netball, dance, and gymnastics), and extracurricular clubs were virtually non-existent beyond netball. In contrast, boys were offered a broader range of sports. The main contributing factor to this disparity were some staffing imbalances where most of the female PE staff were working part-time, with the male PE staff being full-time, some of whom were in the school Senior Leadership Team. This meant the shape of the extracurricular programme for boys' sports was more established, with fewer logistical and scheduling constraints.

WHAT THEY DID

To address this, the SGO coordinated a multi-pronged strategy along with key stakeholders in the host site to do a deeper review of the offer to assess the changes required and the levers and mechanisms to make those changes. This focused on capturing **student voice, data analysis of the provision, leading to direct intervention**. The details of the process included:

- **Student voice** was launched by the SGO to gather feedback from students through assemblies, suggestion boxes, and Microsoft Forms surveys (set as homework to encourage broad participation) all used to gather feedback, particularly from girls, about the extracurricular offer.
- The baseline data gathered in Autumn 2024 was open for all students, receiving 520 responses. The responses overwhelmingly highlighted dissatisfaction from female students with the range of opportunities on offer, and a strong desire for the school to develop a girls' football team and much greater variety in the sports they were offered.
- Of the 24 students that stated they were not an active person, 15 were girls. An informal student voice box was also placed outside the SGOs office, and all of the suggestions received were from girls, and a common theme was the lack of options available for them at school and wanting to do sports/games with their friends.



"We reviewed the data and it showed the differences in opportunity and take-up, so we went on a drive to gather student voice and re-imagine the offer to make sure it reflected what students wanted, and it has really worked."

SGO

A **data gathering exercise and review** also took place to audit the extracurricular provision, which revealed the extent to the gender imbalances. Analysis of club attendance data (conducted alongside a senior leader) showed that the most attended club was a leadership programme rather than a single sport, and that girls' participation rates were lower than boys. Additional analysis and tracking of the data showed gaps in attendance for Pupil Premium students and those students with SEND.

The SGO used female students to present to the school Senior Leadership team to articulate the inequalities that they felt were evident in the curriculum design through to the extra curriculum and competition pathway offers. The SGO submitted an 'Inequality and Inactivity Proposal' to design and deliver targeted activities focusing on less active children and young people and those facing additional barriers to being active, which was informed by youth voice, from children and young people that represent the targeted group (including a focus on girls). The SGO created a 'community links' display board to showcase pathways for clubs' students can attend within the local community, and also set up social media platforms for Cotswolds SGO to showcase, promote and celebrate Girls' football, Sports Leadership and all SGO events.



ROLE OF STUDENT VOICE

From these activities, direct actions were taken to address the issues raised by the students alongside a strategic overview of the extracurricular programme. A girls' football team was established, led initially by the SGO. Uptake quickly grew from just 4 girls to enough participants for full teams in Years 7 through 10. The SGO also took on the responsibility of transporting students to fixtures, even gaining a minibuss licence to remove a logistical barrier to participation.

Sitting alongside practical actions was the SGO taking a strategic role, to influence and promote the value and importance of a broad and balanced extracurricular programme, the role of the School Games Organiser, and the School Games programme. This influence has resulted in regular termly updates being introduced for SLT and governors to present the activities and influence of the SGO role, the types and breadth of delivery, highlighting key successes and raising the challenges faced by the SGO with staff in senior management, which did not happen previously. These regular updates included both qualitative and quantitative findings about student voice and gender disparity in PE, as well as comparisons with other local schools, using insight as the SGO to position the schools' provision against others. This helped to reframe the issue not only as a matter of equity but also as part of the school's wider priorities around improving student experience, strengthening recruitment, and Ofsted readiness.

The 'Inequality and Inactivity' proposal submitted by the SGO also aimed to increase the quality of provision offered to girls within a safe and familiar school environment. This aimed to increase the extracurricular after school provision, developing links with community clubs, using coaches to deliver in school, sharing enhanced equipment to develop community provision, offering CPD to staff and students, and creating leadership opportunities.

EXAMPLES OF IMPACT

- **Significant uptake and growth in the new activities** has been recorded. Participation in girls' extracurricular sport has "rocketed," with many clubs now oversubscribed. Four dedicated girls football teams are now in place across KS3 and KS4.
- **There has been a cultural shift in school**, and there is now genuine excitement around sport among female students. The suggestion box is frequently used, and a new display board for girls' sport is a focal point of student interest.
- Wider engagement has developed, resulting in a **reduction in the number of the least active students**. Students with low engagement have been successfully drawn into the revised offer, often via leadership pathways, and many now attend sports clubs regularly.
- **The influence has also gone beyond the school gates**, with several examples of girls who have transitioned into external clubs through the local club pathways. One example is a student with no prior kit or boots who has attended every week and was nominated for a national girls' football leadership award.
- The strategic element of the review has also led to some **structural changes in the staffing**, and the school has now appointed a full-time **Head of Girls' PE**, which was a role that the SGO strongly advocated for. This has helped formalise and sustain the shift in culture and demonstrates the commitment the school has to the subject, the positive influence of School Games, and the value of hosting the SGO to deliver positive change which leads to positive impacts and outcomes.
- **There has also been a mindset shift in the staff**, with the staff openly discussing mixed-sport opportunities and ensuring parity in scheduling and access to facilities between boys and girls.

"The participation levels have 'rocketed' and we are seeing clubs being over subscribed, which shows the interest in them. Girls football is a great example of growth, now fielding four different teams when there were none previously."

SGO

"Sports leaders act as positive role models for other pupils, both within school and in the local community."

Ofsted report

As a result of the work that has taken place, raising the profile of girls PE and sport, the school's most recent Ofsted inspection referenced the SGOs work on developing leadership opportunities following a direct meeting with inspectors, which is a clear demonstration of the impact that the SGO has had in the school.