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## Sainsbury's School Games Evaluation: Executive Summary Year 1 (November 2011-January 2013)



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This report provides a summary of the evaluation of the delivery and impact of the Sainsbury's School Games, focusing on the 2012 period. This Executive Summary also recognises and refers to developments that have happened since, notably:

- the announcement of £150m investment into Primary School PE and Sport in both 2013/14 and 2014/15 (announced in April 2013); and
- the Taking Part results on competitive school sport, released in April 2013.

This is the second evaluation report on the School Games and considers progress made during 2012, particularly in key areas that were highlighted in the first interim report<sup>1</sup>.

### Background

The Sainsbury's School Games is a competitive school sports programme which seeks to motivate and inspire millions of young people across England to take part in sport, with four levels of activity; competition in schools (intra-school sport), between schools (inter-school sport), at county/regional level, and a national elite event. All 24,052 schools in England are encouraged to take part.

The evaluation study looks in detail at the experiences of the school children, schools, School Games Organisers (SGOs), Local Organising Committees (LOCs) and the wider school and sport sectors and brings out lessons from delivery, examples of what's working well and areas for improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> A summary of the first interim report is available from the Sport England website:  
<http://www.sportengland.org/our-work/children-and-young-people/sainsburys-school-games/>

## Key messages

During 2012 we saw the following improvements and notable successes:

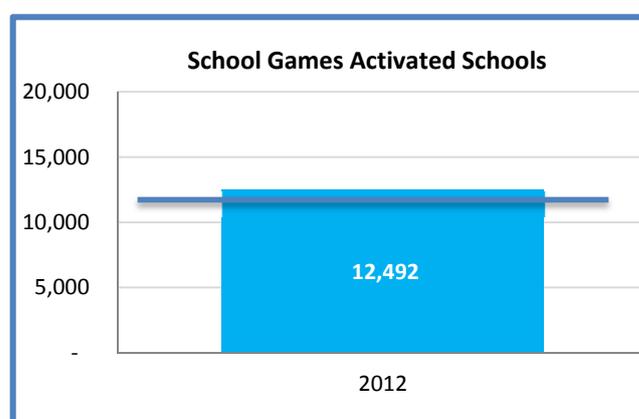
- more schools involved in the Games and more children playing competitive sport;
- a positive Olympic and Paralympic inspiration effect; and
- improvements to the School Games delivery system and growing support for the programme.

There is more to do to strengthen and evolve the delivery and impact of the Games; opportunities and challenges highlighted will inform priorities for delivery during 2013.

### More schools involved in School Games

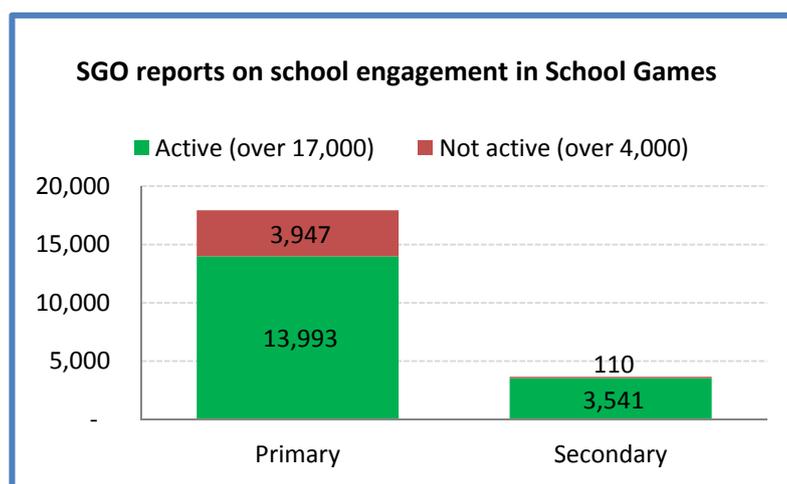
The School Games national partners set a target of encouraging 12,000 schools to register to be part of the programme via the website by the end of 2012.

This was exceeded with nearly 12,500 schools having activated their accounts on the School Games website by January 2013<sup>2</sup>. This represents over half (52%) of all schools in England.



Source: School Games website activations by January 2013, blue line shows target.

Some schools are also engaging with the School Games without having registered via the website. Evidence from School Games Organiser (SGO) annual reports suggests that around 73% of all primary schools and 97% of all secondary schools in England have engaged with levels one and two of the School Games (intra and inter school competition) through working with their local SGOs as highlighted in the table opposite.



Source: Analysis of SGO reports submitted in July 2012

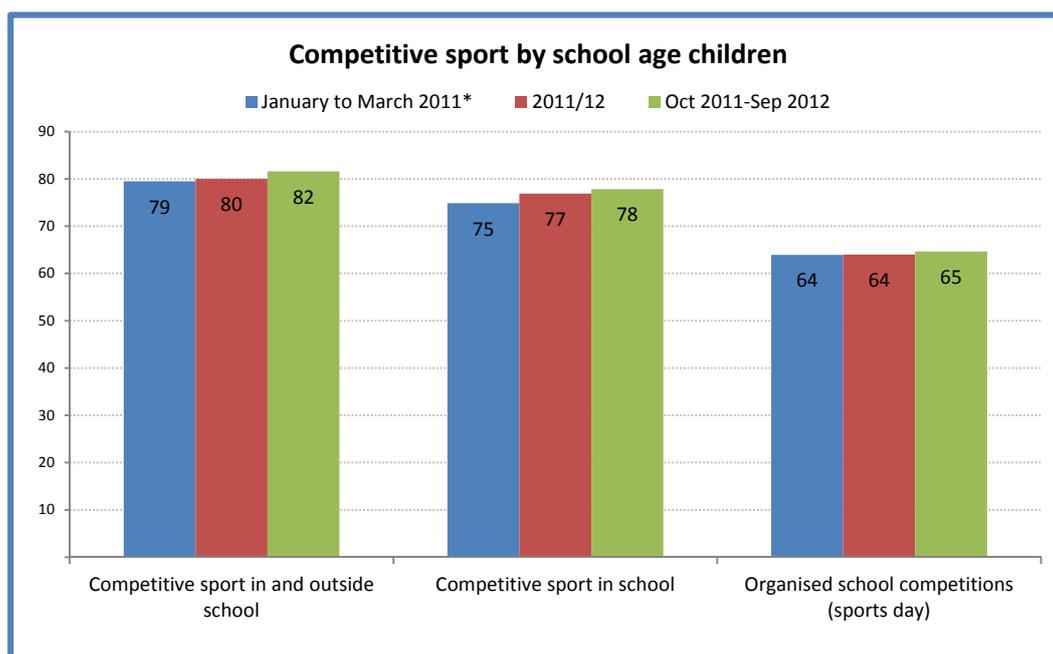
Local Organising Committee (LOC) reports provide information about the amount of activity in level three of the School Games (the county/regional festivals of sports which

<sup>2</sup> A further 3,200 schools registered for the School Games before the current version of the website was launched meaning that over 15,600 schools had registered in one way or the other by the end of 2012.

stage the finals of the level two inter school competitions). These reports show that up to 8,000 schools took part in the level three festivals, and that 100,000 children took part in these festivals (including 10,000 disabled children)<sup>3</sup> across 115 festivals.

### More children playing competitive sport

Engagement of school children in competitive sport is measured through the Taking Part Survey (a national statistic) run by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Monitoring began in 2011 and since then we have seen a positive trend, with increases in the proportion of respondents reporting taking part in competitive sport in and outside of school, in competitive sport in school and in organised school sports days.



Source: Taking Part, data from January 2011 to March. NB changes are not statistically significant

### Successes in 2012

Further evidence gathered through a survey of 100 schools, SGO annual reports, visits to events and festivals demonstrate the progress that has been made during 2012.

### Olympic and Paralympic inspiration

- A positive 'Olympic and Paralympic effect' on participation has been noted by the majority of SGOs. There is also evidence to report enhanced interest from both pupils and schools in a wider range of sports, including disability sports.

<sup>3</sup> Some schools and some children may have participated in more than one festival, so the figures above (8,000 schools, 100,000 children and 10,000 disabled children) show the maximum possible totals.

## System improvements

- **Greater connectivity** between Levels 2 (inter-school competition) and 3 (county/regional festivals) of the School Games has been achieved, which is helping to boost engagement by ensuring pupils can move more easily through the levels and progress to higher stages of competition.
- **Taking children beyond the Games into new sports and community clubs:** The pathway structure is perceived by schools and SGOs as very successful in offering young people the opportunity to take part in a variety of sports, and to progress through to higher levels of competitions and suitable community exit routes. There is increasing evidence of good practice in terms of forming school-club links, and of engagement with clubs and NGBs helping to link competition pathways.

**“We have worked with all of the NGBs and local clubs to achieve all of the outcomes relating to coaching, competition and pathways into clubs”**

- **More focused approach:** The need to operate within tight resource constraints has led to greater prioritisation and streamlining of work in some areas. This has generated some positive outputs such as greater efficiencies in working, although SGOs have inevitably found 2012 to be a busy and challenging year.

## Better support

- **Feel-good factor:** There is strong engagement with the School Games programme at all levels and very strong support for the work of SGOs.

**“I enjoy it because I don’t normally get a chance to do sport”, participant, Cheshire**

- **Support networks:** Strong SGO support networks have been established in some areas. These networks have helped to co-ordinate school sports delivery and to share learning and good practice.
- **Volunteers:** School Games has successfully enhanced its workforce by generating volunteer support including from pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff and parents. The work of the network of County Sports Partnership was recognised as helping find and deploy volunteers; and

**“Young Leaders have been the driving force for most, if not all, competitions at Levels 1, 2 and 3. They have enjoyed and revelled in having responsibilities and acting as mentors to younger children. They have been our biggest advocates of the School Games movement and values.”**

- **Links between sport and culture:** A strong cultural component has been identified throughout the School Games programme. The Young Leaders and Young Ambassadors programmes have been highly praised by SGOs and schools. Cross-curricular opportunities have been identified in many areas (e.g. in media, music, photography and design) and there are plans to expand this further.

"As well as being a great opportunity for the pupils, it has provided me with some great ideas to use back at school in our PE lessons" - PE teacher, Sheffield

### Priorities for 2013

There is of course still more to do to further strengthen and evolve the delivery and impact of the School Games. Opportunities and challenges highlighted in the 2012 evaluation study will inform the priorities for delivery during 2013.

### Challenges and opportunities to do more

- **Streamline reporting systems** to help SGOs accurately report activity whilst minimising administrative burdens.
- **Increase and improve delivery of level 1 activity** and further develop connectivity between levels 1 and 2. There is an opportunity to work with schools to augment and improve level 1 which has been less visible to SGOs and has often not fed directly into level 2 competition opportunities.
- **Address resource concerns.** This was a key challenge that was highlighted in SGO reports with Teacher Release funding coming to an end. Since these concerns were aired additional new funding £150m for Primary School PE and Sport for both 2013/14 and 2014/15 was announced by the Government in April 2013.
- **Further support and develop the volunteer workforce.** Whilst the engagement of the volunteer workforce, particularly young leaders, is seen as a strength of the School Games there can be real challenges striking the right balance between expanding the workforce to engage with a broader range of children whilst maintaining the quality of delivery and not over-burdening individual SGOs, teachers or young leaders.