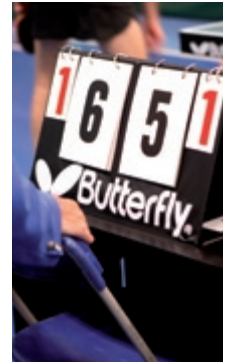


# Developing the landscape for school-aged competition



## Background

The landscape of competitive school sport is changing. High quality competition is one of the four key elements within high quality physical education and school sport for all young people and is a component part of the Government's joint departmental Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy.

To help maximise the opportunities and legacy that the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will provide to competitive sport for all young people, the Youth Sport Trust is driving systemic change throughout the school sport network to develop:

- A world class system of competitive sport which supports the identification and development of talented young performers.
- A step change in the content, structure and presentation of competitive opportunities for all young people of school-age.

## The National Competition Framework

As part of the PESSCL strategy the Youth Sport Trust is supporting the delivery of a locally implemented high quality school sport National Competition Framework. The framework, developed in partnership with Sport England and the National Council for School Sport, will help increase school and club participation in high quality competition and provide a consistent approach to competitive opportunities for all young people.

## Competition Ladder

for delivering high quality competitive opportunities

<b>Key Stage 3/4 (12–16 years)</b>	Inter-school leagues and cup competitions
<b>Key Stage 3 (11–12 years)</b>	Multi-sport competition central venue leagues
<b>Key Stage 2 (9–11 years)</b>	Multi-sport competition central venue leagues
<b>Key Stage 2 (7–9 years)</b>	Termly Multi-skill Festivals
<b>Key Stage 1 (5–7 years)</b>	Annual Multi-skill Festivals (off site)

Table 1

## Working with the National Governing Bodies of Sport

National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and their National School Sport Associations are being supported to reshape their school sport competitions within the National Competition Framework's competition ladder (Table 1). The aim is for each sport to develop an integrated structure from inter-school (local) to district (county) level and above.

**20** sports to date have developed their competitions in line with the National Framework

Each sport has provided a simplified version of its framework which can be downloaded from the Youth Sport Trust website (below).

## Competition Managers

Initial investment from the PESSCL strategy has been used to appoint a network of Competition Managers to manage and co-ordinate the planning and implementation of the National School Competition Framework.

Currently a network of 91 Competition Managers is being established across 28 county areas in England.

A further £100m of funding, announced by Prime Minister Gordon Brown in July 2007, is being used to give every child the chance of participating in five hours of sport every week. Part of this funding will be used to extend the network of Competition Managers to 225, helping every school sport partnership in England to increase the amount of competitive sport they offer.

**From September 2006 – June 2007 across the 19 county areas in which Competition Managers are currently based there has been an average of:**

**374** competitions being run every month

**30,314** competitors taking part every month

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## School Sport Partnerships (SSPs)

SSPs are being engaged as the site of implementation for the National Competition Framework, and Competition Managers are using the SSP infrastructure to maximise and sustain competitive opportunities.

For example, in East London, Competition Managers have utilised the SSPs' young leaders to support events such as the Primary Athletics Championships and the sub-regional disability Multi-skill/Multi-sport Events.

“ We have worked with approximately 200 young leaders during the 2007 summer term and have found them essential for the smooth running and sustainability of competition. ”

Competition Managers Team

## The UK School Games

The UK School Games is being established as the pinnacle competitive event for young people, showcasing talented school-age athletes across the UK.

The Games are being used by the Youth Sport Trust as a catalyst to drive the process of change in school-age competition. Each of the sports involved are modernising their competitive structures for young people and are being supported to develop regional qualification events for the Games.

As a process the Games are also being used to:

- Advocate and demonstrate the highest level of child protection and welfare systems.
- Create opportunities for young people to become engaged in volunteering at major sports events both as technical officials and event volunteers.

“ The UK School Games has been a fantastic event and a huge boost as I move towards my goal of becoming Olympic champion. ”

UK School Games swimming competitor

“ Before we arrived, we were all wondering what it was going to be like but after the opening ceremony and being with all the guys from the other events it has been amazing. It's also great to be able to compete against the best in the country. ”

UK School Games athletics competitor

### Research following the inaugural 2006 UK School Games found (of those interviewed):

95% of competitors had been inspired to improve themselves further.

93% of competitors learnt a lot about competitive sport as a result of their experience.

86% of competitors, team managers, and volunteers said the Games had given them an appreciation of what the Olympics or Paralympics might be like.

## Looking to the future: intra-school competition

The Youth Sport Trust has initiated planning to create modern, vibrant and inspirational intra-school competition which appeals to and engages all. A format for more informal and casual participation will be created through providing events, games and matches for young people whose prime motive is social or recreational participation. The competitions will all be driven and delivered by young people as young leaders and officials.

We will work with NGBs of sport to identify which format of their sport might most appeal to young people who enjoy playing the game or competing, but for whom the formal/official code may be less relevant or appropriate e.g. street athletics and futsal. SSPs will then be provided with materials, resources and tools to publicise and deliver these competitions as inter-form, inter-house or inter-faculty matches and leagues.

### To summarise

As a component part of the PESSCL strategy the Youth Sport Trust and partners are working to increase the quality and quantity of high quality competition through successful implementation of the National Competition Framework. This is being achieved through the Competition Managers infrastructure and the SSP network.

For a more detailed report on this work please email:

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