



# PLAY UNIFIED

## SUMMARY REPORT

In October 2015, a three year collaboration agreement was established between Special Olympics GB (SOGB) and the Youth Sport Trust (YST) to drive forward the vision of Play Unified and Unified Sports.

Play Unified is a Special Olympics international youth led advocacy campaign to help end intolerance towards young people with intellectual disabilities, through supporting unified activities on and off the field of play.

### PROGRAMME REACH

#### PLAY UNIFIED



200

SCHOOLS

are involved in Play Unified across England, Scotland and Wales.



29,871

YOUNG PEOPLE

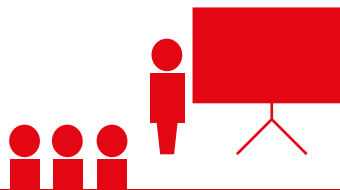
have been impacted upon.



544

YOUNG AMBASSADORS

(54% with an intellectual disability) have been trained.



200

TEACHERS

have been trained in Play Unified since April 2016.

#### PLAY UNIFIED AIMS TO:

- Through youth advocacy, get schools to successfully integrate Play Unified into whole school delivery to help develop inclusive environments through sport.
- Provide young people with intellectual disabilities opportunities to lead and participate in inclusive sport projects alongside their peers with and without additional support needs.
- Strengthen leadership and sport participation pathways for young people with intellectual disabilities.
- Increase awareness of SOGB within the education sector.

## KEY AREAS OF IMPACT

### INCREASED ENJOYMENT

93%

#### OF YOUNG AMBASSADORS SAID THEY HAD ENJOYED TAKING PART IN PLAY UNIFIED

Young Ambassadors reported feeling very positive about Play Unified in surveys completed at the end of the programme. Focus groups further demonstrated this positive engagement.



*I enjoy helping people at the club and I enjoy playing the games that everybody can play, that are big, small, young, old, disabled and people who just want to come for fun."*

**Student, St. Mungo's Academy, Lanarkshire**

### LEARNING NEW SKILLS

92%

#### OF YOUNG AMBASSADORS SAID PLAY UNIFIED HAD HELPED THEM LEARN NEW SKILLS

Young ambassadors felt they had learned many new skills through the programme, in particular teamwork, communication skills and empathy towards others.



*I used to be quite an independent worker and used to love working on my own because you kind of just got all the glory for yourself...it's made me able to work as a team."*

**Student, Highfields School, Derbyshire**

### MAKING NEW FRIENDS AND MEETING NEW PEOPLE

79%

#### OF YOUNG AMBASSADORS SAID PLAY UNIFIED HAD HELPED THEM MAKE NEW FRIENDS.



*"I'm learning how to trust and make friends... when I started this school I was nervous I did not know anyone, and I was scared... ever since I've started Play Unified I've actually asked people if I could be their friend."*

**Student, St. Mungo's Academy, Lanarkshire**

### INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

72%

#### OF YOUNG AMBASSADORS SAID PLAY UNIFIED HAD HELPED THEM PLAY MORE SPORT.



*"I don't normally do sports much so it changed it quite a lot for me, being able to get stuck in, with the sports that I enjoy and stuff, it was good."*

**Student, St. George's Academy, Lincolnshire**

### IMPROVED CONFIDENCE

90%

#### OF YOUNG AMBASSADORS REPORTED THEY FELT CONFIDENT IN THEIR SCHOOL AT LEAST SOME OF THE TIME

Teachers also reported increased levels of confidence among Young Ambassadors.



*"I think it's given her a lot of confidence. Like I say, she'll chat away to you but she finds it very difficult to say no, or to say this is what I want. I think that she's coming out of herself and I can see a positive effect on her."*

**Teacher, St. George's Academy, Lincolnshire**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase investment in growing the number of schools able to access Play Unified in order to
  - a) Engage more young people with and without intellectual disabilities in the youth led campaign, and
  - b) Facilitate further opportunities for schools to engage with each other.
2. Increase investment in Monitoring and Evaluation in order to provide evidence of the outcomes achieved and to support ongoing development and improvement of the programmes delivered.
3. Increase engagement directly with schools senior leadership teams and support schools in spreading the programmes message around their school and community.
4. Maximise the programme to strengthen relationships and engagement with Special Olympic clubs.
5. Ensure young people with intellectual disabilities have a greater voice in school and in sport; i.e. through national Boards/Steering Groups.
6. Invest further in social media promotion of the programme; a relatively small budget could have significant impact in this area.
7. Introduce the programme into year 6 (the final year of primary school) to aid the transition of young people into Unified Secondary schools.
8. Identify and recruit a high profile Ambassador with celebrity status (including high social media followings) to actively promote the campaign and in order to maximise its profile across schools, community and the media.

**98% OF TEACHERS RATED THEIR OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF THE PROGRAMME AS VERY GOOD OR GOOD.**

“

We are immensely proud of the progress our pupils have made and the way in which they have embraced the values of Play Unified. The events have been inclusive, competitive and inspirational for all... it's been wonderful to see the way in which our Young Ambassadors have grown in confidence.”

**Janice Norman, teacher with a focus on Sports,  
Transition and Community, Park Community School, Havant**