



2025 Report Summary

Additional inequalities holding more girls back from sport

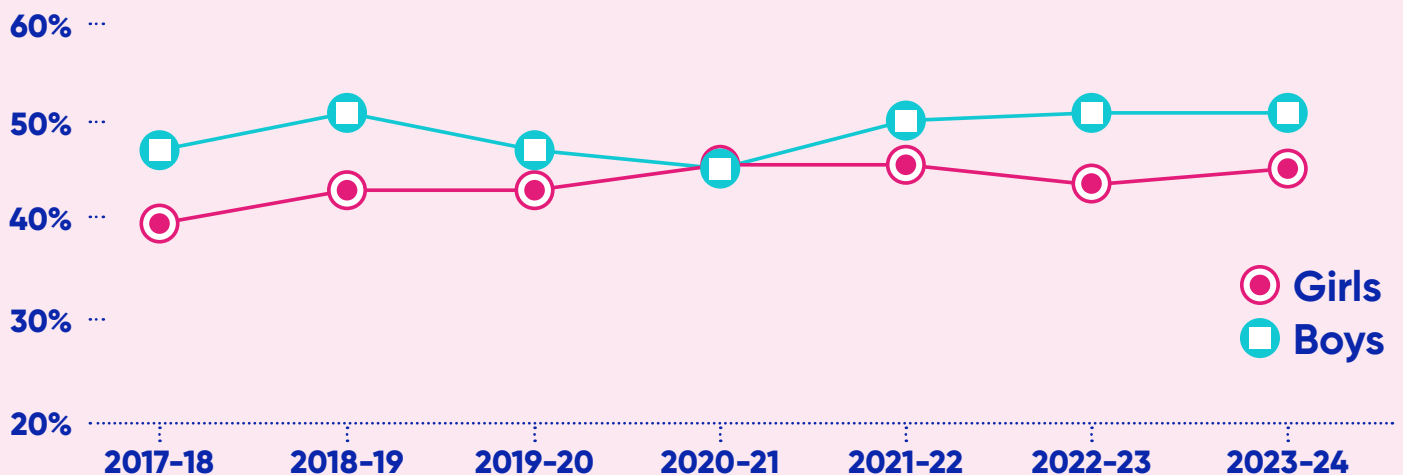
New data from the Youth Sport Trust’s annual Girls Active Survey has found that girls with multiple characteristics of inequality are being left behind in PE and school sport. The survey reveals that girls with two or more characteristics of inequality, such as being from a low-income family, a non-majority ethnicity, or having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are significantly more likely to not be active every day, not feel confident doing physical activity and less likely to like PE than those without further characteristics of inequality.

Every girl should enjoy sport

For the last seven years the Sport England Active Lives survey for Children and Young People, has consistently found that girls aged 5-18 years-old are less active than boys.

The activity gap currently stands at 6%, with only 45% of 5-18 year-old girls meeting recommended activity levels versus 51% of boys.

Active (an average of 60+ minutes a day)



Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey data

The 2025 Youth Sport Trust Girls Active Survey of 17,971 young people across a total of 137 schools in England found that:

- Girls are twice as likely as boys to **not like taking part in physical activity**
- Girls are nearly four times (3.8) more likely than boys to **not like taking part in PE**
- Girls are over three times (3.4 times) more likely than boys to **not feel confident** when taking part in physical activity
- Girls are twice as likely as boys to **not do 60 minutes of physical activity every day.**

Physical activity and PE support health, wellbeing and happiness, and play a key role in developing vital life skills such as resilience.

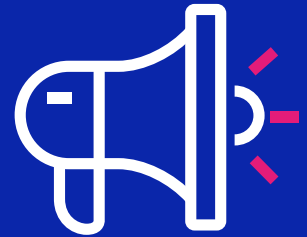
- Girls are over twice (2.2 times) as likely as boys to **not be happy**
- Girls are nearly twice (1.9 times) as likely as boys to **feel that they don't belong to their school**
- Girls are twice (2.4 times) as likely as boys to **not feel resilient.**

*The survey was conducted across two windows – one in Autumn 2024 and one in Summer 2025.



**Girls – your voice matters,
sport does belong to you**

Aaminah Hussain, Teacher & Head of PE



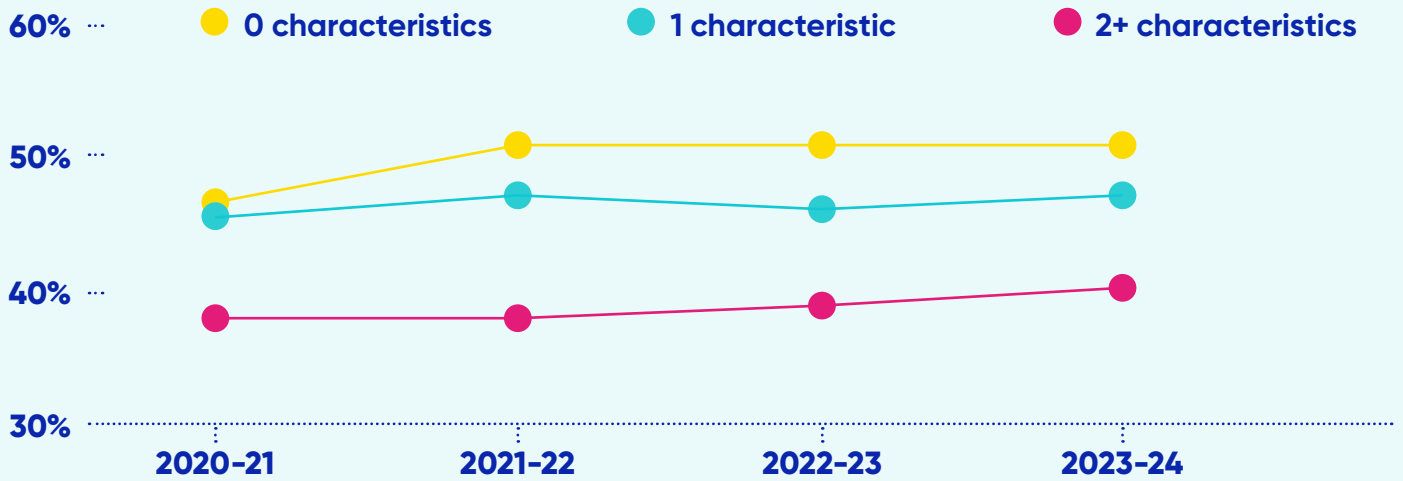
Inequalities make it even harder for some girls

The difference between girls' and boys' enjoyment of and participation in PE is one of the reasons that Sport England have included gender as a 'characteristic of inequality' in relation to physical activity, alongside being from a less affluent family, being of Black or Asian ethnicity and lacking access to a park, field, or outdoor sports space (secondary-aged children).

Their research found that young people with multiple characteristics of inequality are less likely to meet physical activity guidelines. 51% of children with no characteristics of inequality meet activity guidelines, compared to 39% for those with two or more. If everyone with one or more characteristics of inequality could be as active as those with none, there would be 328,000 more active children and young people.



Active (an average of 60+ minutes a day)



Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey data. All children ages 5-18 years.

This year's Youth Sport Trust Girls Active survey has taken a closer look at the experiences of girls with additional characteristics of inequality to see how their perception and experience of PE and school sport differ from girls without these characteristics. The Youth Sport Trust also includes SEND as a characteristic of inequality as research from Activity Alliance found that only a quarter (25%) of disabled children say they take part in sport and activity all the time at school, compared to 41% of non-disabled children.

- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and **1.6 times more likely to not like taking part in physical activity** compared to girls with no further characteristics of inequality
- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and **1.3 times more likely to not like taking part in PE** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality
- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and **1.3 times more likely to not feel confident when doing physical activity** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality

- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and **half as likely to do physical activity every day** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality
- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and 1.4 times more likely to **not feel happy** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality
- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and 1.3 times more likely to **feel they don't belong to their school** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality
- Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality are significantly and 1.5 times more likely to **not feel resilient** compared with girls with no further characteristics of inequality.

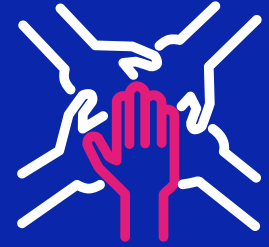
[Click here to read the full report](#)

Girls with two or more characteristics of inequality such as being from a low-income family, a non-majority ethnicity or having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)



No child should be left on the sidelines

Hannah Cockroft
OBE Youth Sport Trust Inclusion Champion



Together, we can change the game

The Youth Sport Trust is committed to tackling the barriers faced by girls, and particularly girls with additional factors of inequality, so that everyone has access and the opportunity to enjoy participating in PE, sport and play.

We are working across several initiatives to create change on a national scale. Examples of the work we are doing include:

The Youth Sport Trust's Girls Active programme

The Youth Sport Trust Girls Active programme, funded by Sport England and the National Lottery, aims to tackle the barriers girls experience in accessing PE and school sport and through cultivating a movement of girls and young women, empower them to take positive action through influencing, leading, and inspiring their peers.

The programme has been delivered in over 1,000 schools since 2015 and has proven effective at increasing girls' engagement, enjoyment and participation in PE, school sport and physical activity.

As a result of participating in the programme 97% of leaders and 58% of participants said that they feel more confident to take part in sport and physical activity.

You can access case studies of effective practice in engaging girls in PE, sport and physical activity here:

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/programmes/targeted-interventions/girls-active/case-studies>

Find out more about the Girls Active programme and free resources here:

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/programmes/targeted-interventions/girls-active>

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/school-support/free-resources/girls-active-getting-started>



Girls Active has given me confidence and inspired me to be the best I can be.

Girls Active Leader

[Click here to watch the video](#)

Youth Sport Trust Leadership Development Programme

Recognising that educators are key role models for young people, the Youth Sport Trust is working alongside Physical Education leaders from ethnically diverse communities to level up life chances of young people who are experiencing the effect of inequalities.

The Leadership Development Programme consists of a tailored CPD programme co-delivered by experts from the Youth Sport Trust Diversity Advocacy Group, equality organisations and Youth Sport Trust experts, alongside opportunities for participants to work collaboratively with other PE leaders from across the country. The programme seeks to:

- 1** Strengthen ethnic diversity in the PE leadership profession.
- 2** Further enhance attendees' leadership and decision making in PE, school sport and physical activity.
- 3** Provide a space for sharing learning and networking.
- 4** Ensure the charity is better positioned to support educators from ethnically diverse communities.

Find out more here:

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/webform/leadership-development-programme-for-pe-leaders-recruitment-pack>

Every Girl is Made for This Game

The FA and Nike, alongside Youth Sport Trust and Muslim Sports Foundation have created a practical guide to help schools break down the barriers Muslim girls face, in PE, physical activity, football and wider sport. It's full of real insights and practical tips to help schools create spaces where every girl feels seen, respected, and empowered to take part.

Find out more and access the resource here:

<https://girlsfootballinschools.org/every-girl-made-for-this-game.php>

