



YOUTH SPORT TRUST *Leadership Framework*

Context

Youth leadership is a core element of the Youth Sport Trust (YST) strategy 2022-35.

Tactic 2 seeks to:

“ Empower young people by unleashing a nationwide community of young leaders who harness the positive power of play and sport to improve wellbeing, build friendships and foster understanding. ”

(Youth Sport Trust (YST) strategy 2022-35, page 22)

It supports our strategic aim to:

“ ...harness the power of play and sport to build belonging for a generation, improving their health, fostering inclusion and developing character and leadership. ”

(Youth Sport Trust (YST) strategy 2022-35, page 16)

<https://www.youthsporttrust.org/about/what-we-do/our-strategy>



Purpose

At the Youth Sport Trust, youth leadership is central to our work. We believe that all young people should have access to leadership opportunities. By providing meaningful leadership experiences, young people can acquire skills and learn behaviours which develops them as individuals, but also prepares them to be active contributors to society throughout and beyond education.

Not only can leadership experiences impact positively on a young persons engagement in sport and physical activity, but through peer leadership, positively influence the enjoyment of those around them. **The purpose of this guide is to showcase our YST approach to youth leadership. Our framework is embedded within all YST interventions to ensure:**

- 1** there is a **consistent** approach to leadership development across YST
- 2** that we use language that supports young people's **understanding** and application of leadership skills (both within and beyond their involvement in physical activity, i.e. whole school engagement and beyond education)
- 3** that all leadership experiences build **self-belief** and **belonging** for young people as we know these are important factors which contribute to improved enjoyment and engagement.

As practitioners, we hope that this resource supports you to explore your leadership offer and provide a framework for which to support its development to enhance leadership experiences within your setting.

Leadership Framework

What is youth leadership?

Youth leadership is the practice of young people exercising authority over themselves and others. Within YST, youth leadership has two components.

Personal Development

It prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood by developing **their personal and social attributes.**



Social Impact

It enables and empowers young people to be of **service to others.**



Why are we developing young leaders?

This graphic (graphic 1) summarises our leadership development purpose.



Outcomes for young people:

Ultimately, leadership should contribute to young people flourishing as learners, employees, citizens and individuals, now and in their future lives.

Leadership also contributes to young peoples physical literacy and physical wellbeing by building confidence and motivation.



Strategic aim:

All YST Leadership activity aims to help build belonging for young leaders and their participants. As creators of leadership activity, training and programmes, we should consider ways in which we can help enable and encourage belonging by providing opportunities which allow young people to do four things.

Be our authentic selves and value difference



Be positively connected to others



« *Building belonging* »

Have a positive connection to a place or space



Be part of something bigger than ourselves



When young people have a sense of **belonging**, they feel safe and secure, positive about themselves, connected to other people, connected to a place or space, purposeful and valued.

Beneficiaries:

Within our leadership programmes, young leaders primarily help themselves, their peers and their school community. Some may work in their wider communities.



Learning:

Leadership means doing! Young leaders develop and actively apply their skills to make a difference to others. **They do this by:**



Sharing a vision



Managing self



Understanding others



Taking action

To undertake each of these **functions**, young leaders need to develop specific **skills**. These skills you'll find listed in graphic 1.

Principles:

Our leadership development is underpinned by four principles. **It involves:**



Empowering: Young people gain the self-belief, confidence, competence and freedom to manage themselves.



Progressing: Young people can continue to grow and move along or between different pathways.



Including: All young people have the potential to lead in their own unique ways, to the level they choose to, fostering an inclusive environment where every individual's strengths and perspectives are valued and encouraged.



Collaborating: Young people work together – and with staff – as leaders and participants.



How are we developing young leaders?

This graphic summarises the different pathways that young leaders might follow. **They may:**

- progress within **one** specific pathway
- progress by exploring **multiple** pathways.



- Beginner:** discovering and experiencing leadership; acquiring and developing leadership skills within curriculum PE.
- Activity leader:** supporting the delivery of physical activity in PE and extra-curricular sessions.
- Advocate:** influencing how PE, sport and physical activity are provided and promoted.
- Activist:** using physical activity and sport to create wider social change.
- Mentor or tutor:** experienced leaders using their skills and knowledge to support less-experienced leaders.

Young leaders should develop the **generic leadership skills** required to carry out the leadership functions shown on the previous page.

Young leaders may also develop **pathway-specific** knowledge and skills. **For example:**

- **Activity leader:** how to organise safe, fun and inclusive competitions.
- **Advocate:** how to make the case for new activities to be offered in PE.
- **Activist:** how to eradicate exclusion or bullying of disabled students in school.