



Engage, support, inspire  
through Sport & Physical Activity

# COUNTY DURHAM YOUNG SPORT AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME



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## BACKGROUND

The newly developed County Durham Young Sport Ambassadors Programme launched in March 2017 with the aim of bringing together the best primary-age leaders from across the county and providing high quality leadership training for Year 5 pupils.

The programme places an emphasis on developing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of sports leadership and forming a group who will give opinions on new primary school sports programmes and assist with the Change 4 Life Festival and the Primary School Cultural Competition at the Level 3 School Games.



## ACTIONS

Primary schools from across the county were invited to nominate a maximum of three Year 5 pupils (aged 9-10) from their school who had previously demonstrated strong leadership skills (either in or out of a sporting context), would benefit from receiving additional leadership training and were committed to developing their sports leadership knowledge and helping County Durham Sport with a variety of activities throughout the academic year.

Twelve pupils from eleven different primary schools were selected to take part in the 2017 pilot programme which ran from March 2017 to July 2017.

The Young Sport Ambassadors were invited to attend three training sessions which aimed to equip them with the skills and knowledge they would need to lead activity sessions in their schools then assist with the Change 4 Life Festival at the County Durham Level 3 School Games.

The first training session was a launch event for the programme which included team building activities to allow the pupils to get to know each other and provided them with an introduction to leadership. The second session taught the Young Ambassadors about Change 4 Life (what it is, why it is important, how it can be used in schools and examples of Change 4 Life games) then an Inclusive Sport workshop with a qualified primary and secondary PE teacher was delivered to give the pupils experience of adapting sports activities for inactive children and those with a disability.

The final training workshop was delivered by Olympian Chris Cook with the theme of 'Role Models'. The content was based around a discussion on who role models are, who can be classified as a role model, how to identify good role models and how the Young Ambassadors can view themselves as role models for other children. The final task for the Young Ambassadors was for them to give their opinions and help to judge the Primary School Cultural Competition for the Level 3 School Games.

The Young Sport Ambassadors were given the opportunity to put their leadership skills into practice as they were invited to volunteer at the Change 4 Life Festival at the County Durham Level 3 School Games. This role required them to participate in a carousel of sports activities and persuade less active children to also take part by encouraging and rewarding them with School Games Value stickers for their hard work and achievements.





## FEEDBACK & IMPACT

Feedback from the pilot programme has been very positive with Young Sport Ambassadors, parents and teachers commenting on the success of the programme.

100% of the Young Sport Ambassadors said they had enjoyed the programme, that the programme had taught them more about leadership and that the programme had allowed them to put their leadership skills into practice.

92% also reported that the programme had helped them to develop new skills and had given them ideas of new sports activities and games that they could deliver to other children.

92% of the Young Ambassadors said that the sessions had helped to improve their teamwork, 83% reported improvements in their creativity following the programme and 75% commented that the programme had also helped to improve their confidence, communication and problem solving skills.

On a five point scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree', 100% of parents selected either 'Agree' or higher when asked whether they thought the sessions were beneficial for their child, whether the session content was appropriate for the aims of the programme and the age of the pupils, whether the delivery of the sessions was of a high quality, whether they felt as though they were well informed about the sessions and received adequate communication and whether they would recommend the Young Sport Ambassador sessions to other parents.

### Parent Feedback:

*"It has made my son more confident and he enjoys helping others."*

*"Given my daughter confidence and improved her knowledge of what makes a good role model or leader."*

*"It has helped my son to realise that he can be a leader and not to hide his qualities."*

*"Allowed my child to interact with children from other schools and made him think about his role as a Sport Ambassador."*

Similar to the feedback from parents, relevant teaching staff from the Young Sport Ambassadors' schools were also asked about the programme.

100% of teaching staff agreed that the Young Sport Ambassador programme was beneficial for the nominated pupil(s) in their school, that the Young Sport Ambassador(s) was able to lead small sports activities within school, that they were well informed about the sessions and received adequate communication and, finally, that they would recommend the Young Sport Ambassador programme to other schools.

100% of teachers also commented that the programme had a positive effect on the confidence, communication, teamwork, creativity and problem solving of the nominated pupil(s).

### Teacher Feedback:

*"It has given our pupil a great deal of confidence and improved their self-esteem. Their speaking and listening skills have improved in other lessons as well."*

*"A very worthwhile programme that promotes the individual learning of pupils and their needs. Parents were also very appreciative and enthusiastic about the programme too."*

*"A big thanks to all who are involved in this programme. Our pupil has come into school this morning so proud after last night. He has had his jumper and t-shirt on all day. His parents are delighted and it's done wonders for his confidence, after only one session."*

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## KEY LEARNING & FUTURE PLANS

Following the positive feedback from the 2017 pilot programme, County Durham Sport plan to run the programme again during the 2017/18 academic year with a cost of £75 per pupil, funded through the Primary School Sport Premium.

When planning and delivering the programme next year, County Durham Sport will take into account feedback from teachers and parents who suggested opening the programme up to all Upper Key Stage 2 pupils (Year 5 and 6) to engage a broader range of pupils and delivering more training workshops throughout the year but reducing the time from 90 minutes down to 60 minutes.

Finally, the Young Sport Ambassadors who took part in the pilot programme will go back to their schools in the new academic year as Year 6 pupils who are able to lead activities and pass on their learning and knowledge to the other Sports Leaders within their school. Also, if the pilot schools decide to nominate another pupil next year, the previous Young Sport Ambassadors can help and mentor them throughout the next year.

